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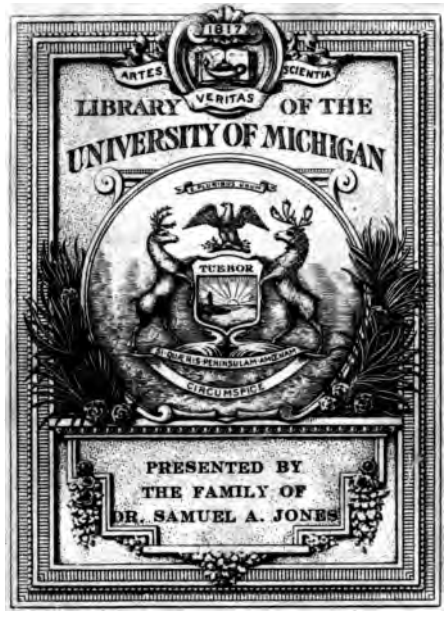

IN MEMORY OF
MARIA J. VAN BRUNT JONES

CHARACTERISTICS

OF

GOETHE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

FALK, VON MÜLLER,

&c.

WITH NOTES, ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF GERMAN LITERATURE.

BY SARAH AUSTIN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:
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PREFACE.

When I began this work my intention was simply to translate Falk's recollections of Goethe. It was suggested to me that many of the persons and incidents alluded to by him were little, or not at all known to the English public, and that a few explanatory notes would not be unwelcome. The idea then presented itself that the works, or passages from works, mentioned by Falk were likewise many of them unknown here, and that I might do a still better service by apprehending specimens of Goethe's manifold productions, in such a form, as I could put them into;—imperfect enough, but still affording glimpses of some of the varied beauties of the original. Other valuable illustrative matter was given to me by friends; and so, without any forelaid scheme, arose all this superstructure upon Falk.

The view of Goethe's practical life then came to hand, recommended not only by its intrinsic value and interest, but by the sanction and authority it had re-

ceived. Knowing, however, that the testimony of friends and admirers neither has, nor perhaps ought to have, much weight with the world, and following up the thought that Goethe must be illustrated out of himself, I again turned to his own works,—the record of his immediate thoughts and feelings, and found there such corroborative matter as I have annexed. I might have added ten times as much.

The Memoir by Monsieur Soret has a character and claims of its own. M. Soret's pursuits are, as we collect from himself, physical; he is not a German; and thus a poetical temperament and national partiality (two things which might tend to lessen the value of his testimony) are excluded. The journal from which the Memoir is extracted, though published in French, is in the hands of very few English readers.

The matter that follows requires perhaps some apology, and I was more than once tempted to exclude it, from the fear of an appearance of book-making. But I think it will be obvious that a sketch of the character and acts of Karl-August of Sachsen-Weimar can never be irrelevant or superfluous in any work of which Goethe is the subject. Independently of the interest which three persons so remarkable as the Grand Duke, his mother, and his wife, must excite, they are to be regarded as among the most important influences of Goethe's life and genius; and we may safely say that under no other ruler, or form of government, could he have been what he was. And this he clearly felt. Whether the influences were favourable, whether the effect was good, is for others to discuss. One thing, however, is to be gathered from this portion of the work, that genius, learning, and liberal thought have a far other field, and a very different hold over the hearts and minds of men of all ranks in Germany, than here;—that the employment of such men as

Goethe, Herder, the Humbolds, Niebuhr, Ancillon, and many others distinguished in art, philosophy, and letters, as active functionaries of the state, is one of the tributes which the Governments of the enlightened part of Germany pay to merit, and is completely in harmony with the tone of public opinion.

The piece of literary criticism from the *Conversations-Lexicon* seemed necessary to complete the view of the Author and Poet. It is brief and imperfect, but any thing like a full review of his works was out of the question.

The extracts from the posthumous number of *Kunst und Alterthum* afford touching proofs of his unquenched energy, his unsubdued sympathies, and of the devoted attachments he inspired. Here, too, are the last lines that flowed from that most prolific pen.

I received from Germany another little work which would have done more to render this compilation *piquant* and popular than any thing I have inserted. I did not, however, find it possible to make any use of it. It is anonymous and disparaging. (See Volume ii. p. 200.) Now, attacks upon a great man, or stories likely to lessen him in public estimation, ought at least to have the sanction of a name. We have a right to ask upon whose authority we are called on to give our belief to matter of so painful a kind. And if the absence of all such sanction determined me to reject the depreciating parts of the book, I felt that I had no right to attach any value to the eulogies of a writer whose censures I did not think worth notice. Nothing remained therefore but "resolutely to ignore it."*

* I had the satisfaction of receiving the following valuable corroboration of my own judgment, from a gentleman who enjoyed the personal friendship of Goethe, and whose name I should gladly

Want of piety towards the specially-gifted teachers and laborious benefactors of mankind is among the

mention if I thought myself at liberty to do so without special permission. The other part of his letter is too interesting to be omitted.

"In compliance with your wishes, I add a few words concerning Goethe; and particularly some remarks for which I am indebted to a lady, a personal friend of Goethe and his mother. She writes as follows:

"To the characteristics of Goethe's extraordinary mother, I should add, that she had a singular art of stimulating young and active minds, and that out of the treasures of her own experience she instructed them in the science of life. How did we hang on her lips when in her joyous yet earnest manner, she related to us, then girls of twelve or fourteen, a story by Musæus or Wieland, or recited a poem by her son.—'She was worthy of Life!' (*Sie war des Lebens werth*) said her great son to me, in the year 1814, when he revisited his paternal city. How intense was her attachment to her friends; how efficient a mediator and helper, how faithful and discreet a confidant was she! She used to say, 'Don't lose your presence of mind because the wind blows roughly; and think on Wieland's words, *die Hand die uns durch dieses Dunkel führt* (the hand that leads us through this darkness.')

"In relation to Goethe's connexion with the Grand Duke of Weimar, the poem '*Klein ist unter Germaniens, &c.*' will not escape you. [See p. 107, vol. ii.]

"In conclusion, accept my cordial acknowledgment and approbation of your decision with regard to the calumnious '*Büchlein von Goethe.*' You judge and act according to Goethe's own maxims. 'When man,' says he at the grave of a friend, 'reflects on his physical or moral condition, he commonly discovers some hidden malady. Life, to all of us, is suffering. Who, save God alone, shall call us to our reckoning? Let no reproaches fall on the departed. Not what they have failed in, nor what they have suffered, but what they have *done*, what they have accomplished, ought to occupy the survivors. By the failings we recognise the species; by the excellencies the individual. Defects we have all in common;—virtues belong to each severally.'

"The common people in Weimar called Goethe, 'our old, kind gentleman,' (*unser alter guter Herr.*) When he was here he visited all the friends of his youth who were still living. He also sought out every individual who had paid his mother attention, and thanked them all."

Frankfurt on Main, Dec. 22d, 1833.

E. L. H.

commonest and yet the most lamentable proofs of barren imagination and defective morality.

> "Es liebt die Welt das Glänzende zu schwarzen
> Und das Erhabene in dem Staub zu ziehen."

But we need no "revelations" to teach us this melancholy and humiliating truth—that "by his failings we know him to be Man,"—one of ourselves,—tainted with the faults with which we all abound. It is no time for flippant exultation when we see that the brightness of the most glorious specimens of our race is spotted and bedimmed in a thousand ways. It were more profitable to ask wherein they excelled us, and how they reached that excellence.

It was suggested to me by an accomplished German scholar by whose opinion I am generally glad to be guided, that I should do better to work up all these separate materials into a regular biographical work. I ventured to think otherwise. It seems to me that the incompleteness, the repetitions, and the disjointedness of this work are more than atoned for by the perfect authenticity and individuality of each portion. Each bears the name and the character of some competent and trustworthy witness. Above all, I preferred this plan, inasmuch as it reduced my own share in the work to what might easily be rejected without prejudice to the substantive matter. Insignificant as it is, I sincerely wish it less. My anxiety to convey the exact meaning of the original and the frequent impossibility of finding adequate words, has betrayed me into explanations which, I am sensible, may be thought tedious and pedantic.

I have also been told that I should be expected to offer some opinion on Goethe's character and works. To this I feel myself thoroughly incompetent. I envy, but am unable to imitate, the facility with which many

writers of the day, even in this country, have made up their minds as to the character, opinions, and writings of this extraordinary man. What I could offer would be but conjecture, and if at any time I think I see more clearly, it is probably only where none can mistake.

I should be glad to refer unconditionally to the writings of my friend Mr. Carlyle, to whom respect and admiration would always incline me to defer, and whose views of Goethe I wish to share, but I confess that he has arrived at more confident conclusions than I can come to; probably because he sees farther. If I were to venture on any observations, it would be rather with the view of suggesting some of the obstacles that seem to exist in peculiar force in this country to the understanding of Goethe, than with the remotest idea of guiding the judgments of others.

The materials now submitted to the English reader suffice to show that quality which struck all who approached his person, and must strike all who study his works; his universality. By this it is not meant that he acquired or produced a number of things; that distinction he would share with many—with Voltaire for instance; yet no man is less entitled to the praise of many-sidedness than Voltaire; for whether in prose or verse, history or fiction, we are certain of meeting the same strains of associations, opinions, and prejudices throughout his works.

But Goethe had the singular faculty of divesting himself of intellectual identity—of becoming that which he contemplated or described—of feeling the sensations, of thinking the thoughts, of other beings. To be able to follow him in his infinitely excursive travels into every region of the Actual and the Possible—to consider all the questions that most interest and

agitate mankind with perfect *indifferency* (using the word in Locke's sense)—requires an imagination as mobile, a temper as impartial, an understanding as large as his. Where are they to be found? To most men (particularly in a country where the divisions of class and sect are so strongly marked as in England) it would be just as possible to transform themselves bodily into the outward form of another. To them every writer necessarily appears intent on attacking or defending, openly or covertly, the opinions, actions, or characters of some party. But, it cannot be too often repeated, Goethe was *not* a partisan. He observed and described. And his power of identifying himself with every state or mode of human existence was not at all confined to those aspects it has already exhibited. His imagination could present him with new situations, new influences, and new results, with equal truth and vivacity. Of this I might suggest many examples.

It is a total mistake to confound these speculations on possible changes in the forms of society, with arguments in their favour.

That he was indifferent to the progress of human improvement, and the sum of human happiness, as some have affirmed, appears to me incredible. It is difficult to conceive what motive could have induced a man laden with years and honours, and secure in affluence, to persevere in labours like his to the last hour of life. Indifferent to many of the questions that are most fiercely debated, he might,—nay rather he *must*—be, for his wide and prophetic glance pierced far beyond the strife of the hour. To those who required of him to join in it, he might well reply,

"**Mortale est quod quæris opus; mihi fama perennis Quæritur:**"—

and not only perennial fame, but, as its inseparable

concomitant, perennial usefulness—usefulness which will be recognised by grateful generations long after the waves which to-day agitate the ocean of life shall have subsided and given place to others;—or, if that may ever be, to calm. Maxims of the most profound, earnest, and enlarged humanity; benign indulgence for frailty; schemes and hopes of improvement; exhortations to labour for the good of mankind, are thickly scattered through his works: are we then justified in accusing him of apathy and selfishness because he had a dread of violent political convulsions; a distrust of the efficacy of abrupt changes in the mechanism of governments?

It was not, surely, that he was indifferent to the welfare of mankind, but that he thought it a pernicious illusion to look for healing to sources whence he was persuaded healing could never come. His labours for the improvement of the human race were unwearied, calm, and systematic. But if the political neutrality he obstinately observed subjected him to the vehement denunciations of many of his countrymen, it will probably be still more revolting to English readers. It is, however, unreasonable to expect the same earnestness and vehemence in support of any cause or system from a man who sees it with all its limitations and possible attendant evils, as from one who can perceive nothing but its advantages. The same clear, serene, far-reaching glance which enabled him to discern "the soul of goodness in things evil," and thence inclined him to tolerance and indulgence, revealed to him the evil that lurks amid the greatest apparent good, and thus moderated his expectations and tempered his zeal.

Another obstacle to the understanding of Goethe's views and works presents itself in remarkable force in

this country. I mean the notions of Art which prevail here, and the absence of æsthetical education.

Goethe was called, pre-eminently, *the Artist.* It was the title in which he delighted, and of which he was proud; and justly. But we must remember that he regarded Art not as the minister to the senses, or the imagination, or the fancy; not, on the other hand, as the mere mask or gliding wherewith to cover the awful and repulsive countenance of morals or of science, and accommodate them to human weakness and indolence; but as essentially, and in and for itself, moral, humanizing, beneficent—the expositor of the Beautiful and the Good. In his view of the matter, therefore, there could be no more vulgar mistake than that confusion of the province of ethics and æsthetics which reigns here.

On the one hand, there has sprung up an impatience of all purely didactic works. It seems to be generally admitted that no body now reads the great teachers of philosophy or morals. On the other, as people are unwilling to relinquish the appearance of learning, they require of writers of fiction to weave into their works such shreds of information as may suffice to keep up the agreeable illusion of the acquisition of knowledge. Children are trained in this confusion of ideas. Labour, the high duty and condition of life, and Art, its purifier, consoler, and charm, are both debased; the one is regarded as an enemy to be eluded; the other, as useless, trifling, if not pernicious, in itself, but conveniently lending itself to the cheat. It is true that a work of Art may be made to inculcate *a moral* (as it is vulgarly called,) or to teach a scientific truth—just as the Apollo Belvedere might serve as a tailor's block —but are these the aims of Art?

I am aware that nothing can be more unfashiona-

ble than this view of the subject, or than the doubt whether any thing great, either didactic or æsthetic, will be produced under this system. If it be said that this view of Art implies indifference to the moral tone and tendency of a work, it can only be replied, that such an objection implies a belief that moral truth and beauty may be violated without injury to æsthetical perfection;—a mistake into which no true Artist could fall.

But I have ventured much farther than I intended. I affect not to explain *any thing* in Goethe;—only to suggest the chief causes which, as it seems to me, render him difficult to understand in all countries, and more peculiarly in this.* The truth, is, I have never yet met with a German who affected to understand Goethe throughout. How far this is his fault I do not take upon me to discuss, much less to decide. It is possible that "the Mysterious, the Sibylline, the Incoherent," in his writings has no meaning—but it seems unlikely.

"Whatever I comprehend," says Mr. Coleridge, speaking of Plato's Timæus, "impresses me with a reverential sense of the author's genius; but there is a considerable portion of the work, to which I can attach no consistent meaning. In other treatises of the same philosopher intended for the average comprehensions of men, I have been delighted with the masterly good sense, with the perspicuity of the language, and the aptness of the inductions. I recollect likewise, that numerous passages in this author, which I

* What has been said relates to his works—the deliberate expressions of his opinions. There are parts of his conversations with Falk which, I confess, appear to me mere effusions of a wanton fancy, to which its possessor gave the reins in the freedom of private intercourse.

thoroughly comprehend, were formerly no less unintelligible to me than the passages now in question. It would, I am aware, be quite *fashionable* to dismiss them at once as Platonic Jargon. But this I cannot do with satisfaction to my own mind, because I have sought in vain for causes adequate to the solution of the assumed inconsistency. I have no insight into the possibility of a man so eminently wise, using words with such half-meanings to himself, as must perforce pass into no-meaning to his readers. When, in addition to the motives thus suggested by my own reason, I bring into distinct remembrance the number and the series of great men, who, after long and zealous study of these works, had joined in honouring the name of PLATO with epithets that almost transcend humanity, I feel that a contemptuous verdict on my part might argue want of modesty, but would hardly be received by the judicious as evidence of superior penetration. Therefore, utterly baffled in all my attempts to understand the ignorance of Plato, I CONCLUDE MYSELF IGNORANT OF HIS UNDERSTANDING."*

Long as this preface is, I would fain add a few words on the only matter connected with this book in which I have a personal interest—the theory of translation. "When languages are formed upon different principles," says Dr. Johnson, "it is impossible that the same modes of expression should always be elegant in both. While they run on together, the closest translation may be considered as the best; but when they divaricate, each must take its natural course. Where correspondence cannot be obtained, it is necessary to be content with something equivalent. 'Translation, therefore,' says Dryden, 'is not

* Biographia Literaria, p. 237.

so loose as paraphrase, nor so close as metaphrase.' "*

"All polished languages have different styles; the concise, the diffuse, the lofty, and the humble. In the proper choice of style consists the resemblance which Dryden exacts from the translator. He is to exhibit his author's thoughts, in such a dress of diction as the author would have given them had his language been English: rugged magnificence is not to be softened; hyperbolical ostentation is not to be repressed; nor sententious affectation to have its point blunted. A translator is to be like his author; it is not his business to excel him. The reasonableness of these rules seems sufficient for their vindication."—(*Life of Dryden.*)

Now this is true as far as it goes; but the view taken by Dryden and Johnson seems to me one-sided.

* "A translation," says Novalis, "is either grammatical, or paraphrastic (*verändernd*, altering,) or mythic. Mythical translations are translations in the highest style. They present the pure, essential, perfect character of the individual work of art. They do not give us the actual work, but its Ideal. As yet there exists, I believe, no complete model in this kind. It requires a hand thoroughly imbued with both the poetical and the philosophical spirit, in their entire plenitude. The Greek mythology is, in part, a mythical translation of a national religion.

"Grammatical translations are translations in the ordinary sense of the word. They demand great learning, but only discursive faculties.

"Paraphrastic translations, to be genuine, require the highest poetical spirit. They easily degenerate into travesties, like Pope's Homer, &c. The true translator in this kind must, indeed, be himself the Artist, and be able to give the Idea of the Whole, thus or thus, at his pleasure. He must be the poet of the poet, and thus be able to make him speak at once after his own original conception, and after that which exists in his (the translator's) mind.

"Not books alone, every thing, may be translated in these three modes."

For it may be that the very thing I want to know is, what *are* the "modes of expression" which are, or were, esteemed elegant in another language. Here is an important key to all that constitutes the individual character of the poetry of a nation, nay of the nation itself;—a key which, according to Dr. Johnson, the translator is to hide or to falsify.

It appears to me that Goethe alone (so far as I have seen) has solved the problem. In his usual manner he turned the subject on all sides, and saw that there are two aims of translation, perfectly distinct, nay, opposed; and that the merit of a work of this kind is to be judged of entirely with reference to its aim.

"There are two maxims of translation;" says he, "the one requires that the author of a foreign nation be brought to us in such a manner that we may regard him as our own; the other, on the contrary, demands of us that we transport ourselves over to him, and adopt his situation, his mode of speaking, his peculiarities. The advantages of both are sufficiently known to all instructed persons, from masterly examples."*

Here then "the battle between free and literal translation," as the accomplished writer of an article in the last Edinburgh Review calls it, is set at rest for ever, by simply showing that there is nothing to fight about; that each is good with relation to its end—the one, when matter alone is to be transferred, the other, when matter and form. Where the form and colour of an author is important, a translation which so far obliterates them as to "substitute the dress of diction the author would have used had his language been English," is, to my way of thinking, a failure. And for this reason I never could prevail on myself to read Pope's Homer. Before I have read ten lines I feel that it is a cheat, and I find it impossible to take the

* The last number of *Kunst und Alterthum* contains an article on the history of translation by Professor Riemer.

least interest in a work in which the very peculiarities I want to know are effaced, and replaced by others. The truth is, that I want to know not only *what*, but *how* Homer wrote. A nation that demands of its translators that they give its own *tournure* to all works of foreign growth, will have bad translations—flat, colourless, or repulsively incongruous.

The praise, that a translated work might be taken for an original, is acceptable to the translator only when the original is a work in which *form* is unimportant. A light narrative, a scientific exposition, or a plain statement of facts, which pretends to nothing as a work of art, cannot be too thoroughly naturalized. Whatever may be thought of the difficulties in the way of this kind of translation, they are slight compared with those attending the other kind, as any body who carefully studies the master-pieces in this way must perceive. In the former kind the requisites are two—the meaning of the author, and a good vernacular style: in the latter, the translator has, as far as possible, to combine with these the idiomatic tone of the author—to place him before the reader with his national and individual peculiarities of thought and of speech. The more rich, new, and striking these peculiarities are, the more arduous will the task become; for there is manifestly a boundary line, difficult if not impossible to define, beyond which the most courageously faithful translator dares not venture, under pain of becoming unreadable. This must be mainly determined by the plasticity of his language and by the taste of his fellow-countrymen. A German translator can effect, and may venture, more than an English; an English, than a French;—and this, not only because his language is more full and pliant, but because Germans have less nationality, and can endure unusual forms of speech for the sake of gaining accurate insight into the characteristics of the literature of other countries.

I shall be told that it is a mere *plaidoyer* in favour of the Germanisms with which I have made bold to affright English readers. I confess it. I do not wish to be thought unconscious of them, still less so presumptuously careless as to suffer them to stand without apology.

I should feel even more diffident than I do in submitting to the public so defective and ill-constructed a book, if I were not encouraged by the profound interest the subject is calculated to inspire, the slender means English readers as yet possess of appreciating him, and the intrinsic beauty and value of the passages which serve as illustrations.

The most remarkable works published in Germany concerning Goethe, of which I have any knowledge, are—

1. "*Ueber Goethe. Literarische und artistishe Nachrichten herausgegeben von Alfred Nicolovius.*" Leipsig, 1828. A collection of fragments, containing the opinions of all his cotemporaries concerning the man and his works; lists of the pictures, prints, busts, and medals of him, and a catalogue of all the editions of his works:—rather a curious book of reference than a book to read. The editor or compiler is Goethe's grand-nephew. (See Vol. ii. p. 112.)

2. "*Goethe in den Zeugnissen der Mitlebenden.*"—Berlin, 1823. By Varnhagen von Ense: which I have not been so fortunate as to see. It is, like the fore-mentioned, a collection of opinions on Goethe, but I hear is a more interesting work. Of considerable volumes written specially on Goethe I know only these two; there are very likely more, but the whole literature of Germany for the last half century is full of him, and I do not remember to have looked into any important work in which he is not mentioned or alluded to, or in

which the impulse given by him to the national mind is not evident. One of the most remarkable proofs of this is afforded by a passage in the last volume of Niebuhr's Roman History. We see the immense value that illustrious and virtuous men, whose strongest passion was the love of truth, set upon Goethe's approbation. Yet their characters were as different as their pursuits. Though the Foreign Quarterly Review has noticed this, I cannot forbear quoting it.

"Our fathers, ere we, who are now old, were born, recognised in Götz and the other poems of a young man who was of the same age as Valerius in his first consulship (twenty-three,) the poet who towers far above all whom our nation numbers, and who never can be excelled. Goethe has enjoyed this recognition for more than half a century; already the third generation of grown men looks up to him as the first man of the nation, without a second, and without a rival; and children hear his name, as formerly among the Greeks they did that of Homer. He has lived to see our literature mainly on his own account, acknowledged and honoured by foreigners; but he has outlived in it the age of poetry and of youth, and has remained solitary and alone. May he, nevertheless, rejoicing in his everlasting strength, long abide cheerfully amongst us, receiving from us as old men the homage which, as boys, we rendered him! May I be enabled to offer him this history complete, on which he has bestowed his favour."

In time, probably, a qualified biographer of Goethe will arise. Mean while, as M. Soret says, "his life is in his works;" and it is only to those who are prevented from studying it there, that this humble attempt to make known some few of this "characteristics" is offered.

S. A.

London, May 23d, 1833.

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GOETHE,

POURTRAYED

FROM FAMILIAR PERSONAL INTERCOURSE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

JOHANN FALK.

Joh. Dan. Falk, *Legationsrath* (Counsellor of Legation) in the Grand Duchy of Weimar, was born at Danzig in 1770. His early love of learning had to contend with great difficulties. His father, a poor wig-maker, had scarcely been able to afford him scanty instruction in reading and writing, when he required his assistance in his business, and tried by every means to stifle the boy's desire for knowledge. Resistance, however, did but increase it, and he expended all his small pittance of savings in hiring books. He read day and night the works of Gellert, Wieland, Lessing, &c. as he could find opportunity. Often, in the winter's nights of that severe climate, he used to stand and read under a lamp in the open street. His discontent with his situation grew with his years. He determined to leave his father's house, and to go to sea. He accordingly ran away, and wandered about for several days in the forests on the coast; but as the masters of vessels refused to take him on board, because he could not speak English, he was obliged to return. At length he obtained his father's leave to enter on a regular course of study. At sixteen he entered the gymnasium, where he had the advantage of excellent instruction, but had still to struggle with want. After attending the gymnasium of Danzig for six years, he went to Halle, where he studied under Wolf, Forster, Klein, &c. In 1793 he left Halle, and repaired to Weimar, where he rendered himself independent by his industry and acquirements. In 1806, when the French marched through Weimar, and in the eventful time which succeeded the battle of Jena, he had an opportunity of rendering important service to the town of Weimar, which the Duke rewarded by appointing him *Legationsrath*, with a salary. Still greater were the services Falk rendered to the suffering

and the helpless. In 1813, when Saxony was invested by friends and foes, the misery of the deserted children, and the corruption which might be expected to be the consequence, oppressed his heart, softened by the loss of four promising children, who died in one month, of typhus. He laid the foundation of an association which is still most beneficent. Its prime object was to provide forsaken children, who had been suffered to run wild, with instruction in useful trades. Up to the year 1824 Falk had sent out above two hundred and fifty apprentices (*Lehrbursche,*) as journeymen (*Gesellen.*) Some of the boys studied at the university, others became schoolmasters, merchants, artists; most of the girls went into service. This institution gave birth to similar ones at Jena, Erfurt, Berlin, &c. As writer, he first appeared in satire, and was so favourably noticed by Wieland, that the highest expectations were excited. Indeed, his first satires, *Die Gräber von Rom*, and *Die Gebete*, were full of wit. In 1823, after other works, appeared his dramatic poem *Prometheus*, an admirable and profound work, but deficient in harmony and perfection of detail. He published novels and tales, a journal, and the *Classical Theatre of England and France.* In 1817, he commemorated the third jubilee of the Reformation, by two beautiful poems, in stanzas—*Johannes Falk's Liebe, Leben, und Liden in Gott.* He died on the 14th February, 1826. The institution he had founded has been supported by friends, aided by the government.—*Conversations-Lexicon.*

GOETHE,

POURTRAYED

FROM FAMILIAR PERSONAL INTERCOURSE.

CHAPTER I.

Character and peculiarities of eminent men inherited from their mothers.—Goethe's moral resemblance to his mother.—Her aversion to all violent impressions.—Her humour.—Goethe's father.—His austerity.—His mother's indulgence.—Corona Schroeter.—Madame Goethe's self-accusation.

It has often been remarked, that great and eminent men receive from their mothers, even before they see the light, half the mental dispositions and other peculiarities of character by which they are afterwards distinguished (1.)

Thus in Goethe's character we find a most sensitive shrinking from all intense impressions; which by every means, and under every circumstance of his life, he sought to ward off from himself. We find the same peculiarity in his mother, as we shall see from the following curious and characteristic traits. They were related to me by a female friend who was extremely intimate with her in Frankfort.

Goethe's mother, whenever she hired a servant, used to make the following condition: "You are not to tell

me of any thing horrible, afflicting, or agitating, whether it happen in my own house, in the town, or in the neighbourhood. I desire, once for all, that I may hear nothing of the kind. If it concerns me, I shall know it soon enough; if it does not concern me, I have nothing whatever to do with it. Even if there should be a fire in the street in which I live I am not to know of it till it is absolutely necessary that I should."

In the year 1805, when Goethe was dangerously ill at Weimar, not a single person, of all those who frequented his mother's house, ventured to speak to her on the subject. It was not till long afterwards, when he was perfectly recovered, that she voluntarily entered on it, and said to one of her friends, "I knew it all, but I never said any thing; I never would say what a dangerous state Wolfgang was in; but now you may speak;—now he is better. God, and his good constitution, have carried him through. Now we can talk again about Wolfgang, without my feeling a stab in my heart every time I hear his name."

This same friend added, "Had Goethe died at that time, most likely none of us would have dared to mention the event in his mother's house; at least only with great caution, or when invited to it by herself; for, as I have already remarked, either from some peculiar constitution of her mind, or from principle, or perhaps from both combined, she invariably shunned all violent emotions and impressions, whenever it was possible to do so.

At the bottom of a letter which Goethe received from his mother when she was in her seventy-third year, somebody wrote—"Such should God have made all mankind."

Another part of Goethe's nature, on which all his other natural qualities rested as their basis, and from which they received the amplest and richest developement, is a most bounteous vein of joyous, flowing, mother wit; or, as some would call it, of *naïveté* and hu-

mour. This was also in a high, and often comic degree, remarkable in his mother. His father was old and more reserved, or as Krause (2) the painter, his fellow-townsman, expressed it, a strait-forward Frankfort citizen (*reichsbürger*,—imperial burgher,) who was wont to order his life and conversation with measured steps. Perhaps Goethe inherited a little of his formality. Many who knew his father intimately declare that his son's gait, and the position of his hands, were precisely his.

His mother was of a cheerful temper and quick joyous senses, such as are frequently born amid the vineyards and sunny hills of the Rhine; and as she was considerably less advanced in years than her husband, she took every thing more lightly and pleasantly than he did. She sometimes said, in her sportive way, alluding to her having been married so young, and a mother at sixteen or seventeen, "My Wolfgang and I have always gone on very well together: the reason is, we are both young, and not so far asunder in age as Wolfgang and his father."

Many a wild frolic of her son's which his austere father would hardly have passed over, she regarded with true motherly loving indulgence, or, rather, heartily entered into.

Once, for instance, at a skating party, when she and a female friend were sitting in a sledge, looking at this animating sport of youth, Wolfgang took off her cloak, hung it around him, and darted to and fro on the ice for some time before he brought it back to her. She laughed gaily, and told him it was very becoming to him.

At a later period when, in conformity with his father's advice, Goethe commenced his civil life, and submitted to the drudgery of an attorney's office, his mother veiled many things with the mantle of love, which his father would have found it difficult to forgive. In the same degree in which the somewhat

stern father tried to keep his eyes open to Wolfgang's neglect of his profession, did the indulgent mother seek to close them. Many a manuscript of the youthful author* was suddenly transformed into a pretended deed; many a little invitation to an innocent garden pic-nic, with young gay companions, into a note from some client.

The amiable Corona Schroeter (3,) for whom Goethe afterwards wrote his "Iphigenie," at Weimar, used to tell many anecdotes of this kind in the most delightful manner. Much, indeed, of what relates to Goethe's early life, in the subsequent part of this work, I carefully wrote down in my journal from her mouth.

At an advanced period of her life, when she had been tormenting herself for weeks together, and making bitter complaints of the infirmities of age, Goethe's mother said to a friend who called on her, and asked her how she was, "Thank God, I am once more contented with myself, and can endure myself now for a few weeks to come. Lately I have been quite intolerable, and have turned against God Almighty like a little child who knows not what he would have.

"Yesterday, however, I could not bear myself any longer, and so I scolded myself heartily, and said, 'Shame on thee, old *Räthin* (Counselloress,) thou hast had happy days enough in the world, and thy Wolfgang to boot; and now, when the evil days come, thou must e'en take it kindly, and not make these wry faces. What dost thou mean by being so impatient and naughty when it pleases God to lay thy cross upon thee? What then, thou wantest to walk on roses for ever? now, when thou art past the time too—past seventy!' Thus, you see, I talked to myself, and di-

* Goethe was only nineteen when he wrote the "Mitschuldiger."

rectly after my heart was lighter and all went better, because I myself was not so naughty and disagreeable."

Those who were at all acquainted with Goethe's person and manners will instantly agree with me, that much of this amiable temper, and of this vein of *naïf* humour, which nothing in life or death could subdue, flowed in full tide from her veins into his. We shall give farther proofs of this hereafter, from the history of his earlier years; as well as of his more serious moods, from the later.

CHAPTER II.

Goethe's manysidedness.—His turn for observation.—"Metamorphosis of Plants."—"Doctrine of Colours."—Biographies of Wieland and Johann Heinrich Voss.—Goethe a calm observer of events.—Incompatibility of this character with that of a partisan.—The bent of his mind opposed to that of the public mind of his time.—Unjust charges brought against him.—Defence.—Goethe's opinion of Meyer.—His value for experience as opposed to hypothesis.—His love of the natural as distinguished from the acquired or the artificial.—His candour.

GOETHE's manysidedness,* both in art, and in the accurate perception of character, and of external objects generally, has been much celebrated, even by those who hunt after the universal diffusion of knowledge, now so much in vogue, with the voracity of an empty stomach.

It is doubtless an entirely peculiar privilege of his genius, that he had the power of absolutely and sensibly losing himself in the object, whatever it was, to which, at any particular point of time, his attention was directed; whether it were man, beast, bird, or

* After the word *vielseitigkeit*, the author inserts, between brackets, *objectivität*. Those who are at all familiar with German literature, or with the language of the Kantian philosophy, which has insinuated itself into that literature to a degree perhaps to be regretted, will understand that *objectivity* means power or habit of employing the senses and intellect on external objects. It is opposed to *subjectivity*, *i. e.* power or habit of employing the mind on its own internal operations—on itself.—*Transl.*

plant: nay, that he, to a certain extent, transformed himself in imagination into the very thing itself.

It cannot be denied that Goethe's greatness, as observer of nature and as poet; his style, his mode of thinking, his power of depicting objects, his originality; I might almost say the whole weakness, as well as the whole strength, of his moral and intellectual being, must be sought in this objective turn of mind.

How often have I heard him, when he wanted to give himself up to an investigation of this kind, earnestly entreat his friends not to disturb him with the thoughts of others upon the subject; alledging that it was a rigid invariable maxim with him, when in such moods, to keep aloof all external influences. It was not till he had exhausted his own powers on the matter; had, as it were, confronted it, and spoken with it alone, that he would go into the representations or views of others: then, it delighted him to know what others, long before him, had thought, done, or written, on the same subject. He then, with great honesty and candour, corrected his mistakes in this or that particular; while on the other hand, he was filled with a child-like delight, when he saw that, by his unaided, original efforts, he had gained here and there a new view of the phenomenon.

How many things did nature thus reveal to her darling, in the silent, solitary path of mental inquiry and inward debate, which so few are capable of treading! And, as old fables tell us that plants, stones, flowers, clouds, and light, have all their several voice and utterance, so it cannot be denied that our old German Magus (to continue the figure) was deeply versed in the language of birds and flowers, and was able to interpret it to others.

His "Metamorphosis of Plants" (4,) (*Metamorphose der Pflanzen*,) his "Doctrine of Colours," (*Farbenlehre*,) are beautiful monuments of his calm spirit of investigation: they are, so to speak, filled with the inspired

glimpses of the seer, reaching deep into distant ages, and into the hidden domain of science; while on the other hand, his biographical delineations of two characters so utterly different from his own as those of Wieland and Johann Heinrich Voss (5,) sufficiently manifest, not so much his literary skill, as his own beautiful nature, which could take in every object in all its genuineness and purity, and reflect it back like a clear, spotless mirror. Wieland's biography becomes the living Wieland; and Johann Heinrich Voss appears, in Goethe's delineation, stripped of all the angularities and callouses which render the course of life so difficult. It is as if Goethe were this very Johann Heinrich Voss himself; so admirably does the great Master know how to bring before our eyes the education of this learned and singular man, (wrung with toil and difficulty from untoward external circumstances,) to its full completion; and to make it intelligible to us with all its details and peculiarities.

As this lofty talent of Goethe has been universally acknowledged, so, on the other hand, has he been as loudly reproached with the luke-warmness of his moral sentiments, as far as these can be inferred from his writings. His admirers at first sought to destroy the force of this censure, by alledging that the proper province of art is to withdraw itself wholly from moral considerations, and from all the rigorous restraints they impose. As a consequence of this assumption, all those who expressed their dissatisfaction at certain over-free delineations of Goethe's muse, were pronounced, without farther ceremony, narrow-minded bigots. From this time it seemed as if a loose was given to a multitude of licentious productions, in which all that was highest and holiest was too often made the sport of the lowest human passion; nay, even the cloak of the coarsest sensuality.

It appears to me that the disputants on both sides overlooked a main point throughout the whole discus-

sion. A mind like that of Goethe, in which a calm observation of all things was an innate and characteristic quality, could by no possibility fall into that moral enthusiasm which the age exacted, and which it was too much inclined to consider as the highest possible prerogative of human nature. Goethe was born to identify himself with things; not things with himself. From the moment in which the public enters the lists with passion against real or supposed evil, it cares little to examine the good sides which this very evil, if considered with perfect calmness, might perhaps present to the eye of the observer.

Thus was Goethe placed, even by the highest and noblest peculiarity of his nature, in direct opposition with his age. Goethe wanted to observe—his age wanted to act; and to seize upon every occasion, however slight, which presented itself as a possible reason for action. It was this which once led him to say to me, "Religion and politics are, a troubled element for Art; I have always kept myself aloof from them as much as possible." There was but one party for which, with such views, he could declare himself: that, namely, under whose influence tranquillity might be expected, or even hoped for, let it be found how it might.

But it happened that religion and politics, church and state, were exactly the cardinal points within which the age in which he lived was destined to be remodelled. All science, and all action, were irresistibly determined by the spirit of the age to this centre. A way was forced through the most intricate questions; and the Many, with their dark and confused notions of their own condition and interests, shared the universal tendency, without any distinct conception of what was passing, or of its operation on themselves.

The clear-sighted Goethe had a thorough insight into this; and thence indeed it was, that every thing of the kind became so extremely distasteful to him; and that in society he would rather talk of one of Boccaccio's

tales, than of matters on which the welfare of Europe was thought to depend.

Many people attributed this way of thinking to cold, unsympathizing, indifference of temper; assuredly with injustice. To be other than he was; to share the universal ardour and struggle for a new order of things, as Wieland, Klopstock, and even Herder did, Goethe must have ceased to be himself; and have suddenly and utterly renounced the many-sided observation with which he was wont to regard, and the mature deliberation with which he was wont to weigh, all things, and consequently this historical phenomenon among the rest. Certainly the tranquil observer of all the events of this moving and checquered life, and the actual participant, whether doer or sufferer, in its strife and tumult, are characters essentially distinct and incompatible. The latter can by no possibility form an accurate and impartial estimate of his own situation. There is no point of neutral ground on which he can gain a footing. It would be absurd to ask the dove to write the natural history of the eagle; it *must* be one-sided. There is wanted some third nature, elevated far above both; truly godlike; which receives both into its bosom, and discriminates their respective excellencies and deficiencies; acknowledges the former, and if it cannot love the latter, at least strives to bear, and even to excuse them.

It is only by taking a firm stand on this elevated and commanding point (whence the low game of human life, with all its contradictions, is seen to roll up beneath our feet, like the many-coloured curtain of a theatre,) that we can either form an idea of the soul which animates Goethe's works, or acquire the least right to form a judgment of our own on so extraordinary and unique a man.

Goethe, too, plied his wings, and was as industrious as a bee; but his activity was the pure activity of the

artist;* consequently of a totally different kind from the bustling activity of the man who struggles in and with the world. The domain of Science, such as it had been extending itself through ages; the kingdoms of Nature and of Art, whether in their earliest rise or their gradual development;—these were the regions which he traversed with unwearied wing; and whatever treasures he collected during his long excursive flights, were brought home and shared with the friends whom he thus enriched and delighted.

For his own part, he thought it better to spare mankind, already sufficiently vexed and worried on all sides, all more remote and abstract questions; nor when he excited their sympathy in any of his inquiries, or afforded them instruction and delight, did he ask for any other proof of gratitude from them, than that they would abstain from roughly touching him and such kindred spirits as were given to speculations like his own, with the iron arm of reality; or from startling them out of the beautiful dreams of past ages, in which they love to indulge, into the Present.

But if this happened, the pleasant roughness of the gipsey chief, in the "Fair at Plundersweilern," (*Jahrmarkt zu Plundersweilern*) was heard again from his mouth.

Lumpen und Quark
Der ganze Markt! &c.

This theme, only a little changed, as in that hymn,

"Ich hab' mein Sach auf Nichts gestellt," &c. (6.)

which is in truth only a variation of the former, was

* I do not think it necessary to deprive myself of the use of this high and comprehensive epithet, because it happens to have been vulgarized and restricted in England, or made ridiculous in France. English readers must try to understand it in the large and refined sense in which alone it can apply to Goethe.—*Transl.*

a pervading one with Goethe, and formed, so to speak, a part of his peculiar view of life.

Utterly unjust, I may say, enviously calumnious, is the charge brought against him, that he was false to his own genius, and devoted it, with interested and servile views, to the spirit of the circumstances and times in which he lived. No one ever, in all his works, through all the maxims he laid down, through all the impulses which proceeded from him, so uniformly and deliberately attended solely to his permanent and cosmopolitan fame and importance. It is true that both the church and the state will hereafter have cause to rejoice in the fruits of this majestic tree of true German race and growth; though, strangely enough, every consideration relating to church or state was carefully excluded from his mind during the formation of his own opinions and taste. We may therefore truly assert that, for any influence which Goethe will exercise in future on these subjects, we have to thank nature alone; since, as I have already observed, whatever he did was utterly without view to that end. But, as he resigned the Present almost with indifference, and freed himself from all passion in the contemplation of it, so much the nearer did he draw to the Future. In all that regards science and art, that Future will assuredly give ear to him, and will hail him as one of her most unsuspected witnesses; nay, truest harbingers. Indications, and data enough, for untwisting the tangled skein of the Present lie scattered throughout his works. Posterity will collect them.

I by no means impute this propensity to him as any remarkable merit, as I have already said; I only wish to adduce it as a quite peculiar prerogative of his clear nature, in which all the gifts of intuition* were con-

* *Alle Gaben der Beschaulichkeit.* It might be Englished, *all the perceptive faculties*, with some approach to the meaning, but with no adequate expression of it. *Beschauen* is more than to perceive, for it is to look at attentively, to examine and seek into—*intueor.—Transl.*

centrated, as in a crystal lens; the more, because this view of the subject is the only one which can adequately protect him against the often unmerited reproaches of the better and nobler of his friends, or of those who required at his hands things which would have placed him in utter contradiction with the most beautiful part of his own character.

They did not reflect that it was as absurd to expect of the author of "Goetz of Berlichingen" that he should throw his iron hand into the political scale against the magistrate and his despicable helper's-helper in the town-hall of Heilbronn, with crushing weight and pressure (7,) as to require that the sturdy Goetz himself should write, with that same iron hand of his, a pleasant masque, or an "Iphigenie," or a "Tasso." If, on the contrary, we are content to demand of Goetz what appertains to Goetz, and of Goethe what appertains to Goethe, (as, in compliance with nature, we unquestionably ought,) the right position for judging of both will be found.

An expression which Goethe once used with regard to our noble-minded friend Meyer (8,) the painter and critic, has always struck me as remarkable, and might perhaps be applied with greater justice to himself. "All of us," said he, "without exception,—Wieland, Herder, Schiller,—have suffered ourselves to be duped by the world on one point or another; and for that very reason, if we could return to it hereafter, it would at least, not give us a bad reception.

"But in Meyer, long as I have known him, I never could discover any thing of the kind. He is so clear-headed, and on all points, on all occasions, has so calm and perfect an apprehension; he sees what he sees so through and through, so without all mixture of passion, or of the troubled spirit of party, that the reverse of the cards which nature plays with us here below cannot possibly be hidden from him. But for that very reason the return of his spirit to this scene is out of

the question; for nature does not like that we should look, uninvited, so far into her game; and when from time to time a man arises who catches one of her secrets, ten others immediately start up, who industriously conceal it again."

Goethe, by his very nature, cannot, must not, will not, set a single step which may compel him to quit the territory of experience, on which he has so firmly and so happily planted his foot, and taken root for more than half a century.

All conclusions, observations, doctrines, opinions, articles of faith, have value in his eyes only in so far as they connect themselves with this territory, which he has so fortunately conquered. The blue horizon beyond it, which man is wont to paint to himself in such beautiful colours, troubled him little; indeed he shunned it, knowing, as he did, that it is the abode of all brain-woven fantasies, and that all the phantoms of dim and gloomy superstition (which he hated) held their throne there.

He listened with patient, nay grateful attention to all attempts to substantiate the Possible, whether good or bad, such as it presents itself in all directions within the limits of experience.

Even virtue, laboriously and painfully acquired, was distasteful to him. I might almost affirm, that a faulty but vigorous character, if it had any real native qualities as its basis, was regarded by him with more indulgence and respect than one which at no moment of its existence is genuine; which is incessantly under the most unamiable constraint, and consequently imposes a painful constraint on others. "Oh," said he, sighing, on such occasions, "if they had but the heart to commit some absurdity! That would be something, —and they would at least be restored to their own natural soil, free from all hypocrisy and acting. Wherever that is the case, one may entertain the cheering hope that something will spring from the germ of

good which nature implants in every individual; but on the ground they are now upon, nothing can grow."

"Pretty dolls!" was his common expression when speaking of them. Another favourite phrase was, "That's a piece of nature;"* which from Goethe's lips was considerable praise.

With questions concerning time, space, mind, matter, God, immortality, and the like, Goethe occupied himself little. Not that he denied the existence of beings superior to ourselves. By no means; they were foreign to his pursuits, only because they lay completely out of the region of experience, to which, upon system, he exclusively devoted himself. Repugnance to the super-sensual† was an inherent part of his mind; and which among us is bold enough to engage in a boundary dispute with Nature? Had Goethe been a Leibnitz or a Kant, we should have had, instead of an "Iphigenic" and a "Faust," an able system of Metaphysic; but as he was Goethe, it is but fair to allow him to be and to remain Goethe, at all points, and in all respects.

As he once beautifully remarked in conversation with me, "In the series of the manifold productions whereby the creative powers of Nature became visible, man was, so to speak, the first dialogue that she held with God." And thus might one say of himself, that he, by his stubborn persistency within the limits of experience, represented the last product of plastic Nature; revealing, together with her secrets, the two tendencies which lay hidden in her from eternity, and which, spite of all apparent contradictions, must be taken together to form a true, entire, and perfect cre-

* *Das ist eine Natur*—literally, that is a Nature.—*Transl.*

† *Uber-sinnlich.* I take the liberty to translate into Latinized English a word, of which we are much in want; *superhuman* and *supernatural* both miss the mark.—*Transl.*

ation; a view of things which might afford no contemptible addition to the definition of what we call genius. For as genius, from the moment in which it breaks away from nature, wanders into the most unpleasant labyrinths and not unfrequently falls into webs of the brain, and the monstrous progeny of dreams, yet does it share with nature both those two grand tendencies; the one within the tranquil kingdom of custom and law, where, in a delightful repose and self-contemplation, it paints a series of quiet pictures; the other, in the violence of the whirlwind, the lightning, and the earthquake, by which the mother of all things quickly puts an end to those somewhile contradictions which are found in her works, in a manner which to us appears utterly lawless, though, in truth, conformably to her own immutable laws, by which she brings destruction out of life, and life out of destruction.

To demand of Goethe to give himself up exclusively to one of these tendencies, is at bottom nothing less than to require of him to cease to be Goethe; which he could only accomplish by ceasing to acknowledge the laws of nature as the sole available rule for himself, and those like him. If then people have sometimes denied to this great and graceful genius a feeling for morality, it is because they have measured him by a standard which was inapplicable to him, and have not reflected that he could not love to make a sort of business of morality. In this, too, every thing not native and original, every thing merely learned by rote, was distasteful to him; as was all taught elevation of soul, all taught philosophy, all praying by rote, and so on. To such a degree was this the case, that he not unfrequently subjected himself to the greatest misinterpretation by expressing this aversion in the most undisguised manner, in the presence of men of flat and shallow minds. We shall see, however, hereafter, in the judgment he pronounced on Louis, King of Hol-

land, and his brother, Napoleon, with what deep justice, truth, and gentleness, nay, reverence, he comprehended and regarded every tendency of a moral nature.

And if a rule of the English constitution, which declares that peers shall be tried by peers alone, may be applied to the moral world, such a recognition of the truly peculiar and noble on the part of so great a contemporary might shame and confound many a one-sided judgment, while it would substantiate what he says in "Tasso"—

"——— wo du das Genie erblickst
Erblickst du auch zugleich die Marterknone."*

* ——— Where thou beholdest genius
There thou beholdest too the martyr's crown.

CHAPTER III.

Goethe's accurate observation of nature.—The piece of granite.—Goethe's opinion of modern naturalists.—Their want of originality and inventiveness.—The Dyer of Heilbronn.—Lectures.—Euclid's Elements.—Ghost of Friar Bacon.—Solar microscope.—Watches.—Metamorphosis of Plants.—General tendency to blind and servile imitation.—Early civilization of Britain.—Causes of this.—English people.—Goethe's invocation to his countrymen.—Herder.—Goethe and the tame snake.—The chrysalis.—Frau von Goethe.—The fig tree.—Drawing.—Fantastic forms of vegetable nature.—Parasitical plants.—Theory of a solar ring.—Goethe's love of natural curiosities.

FAITHFULLY devoted to nature as Goethe was, he loved to speak of her works and ways with mysterious prefaces and intimations.

Thus he once led me to his cabinet of natural history and said, while he put into my hand a piece of granite which was remarkable for its unusual transitions, "There, take the old stone as a memorial of me. Whenever I find an older law in nature than that which manifests itself in this product, I will present you with a specimen of it, and take this back again. Up to the present time I have discovered none such; and I doubt exceedingly whether any thing similar, not to say better, in this kind of phenomena, will ever come under my notice. Look attentively at these transitions: such is the universal tendency, the final result, of all in nature. Here, you see, is something

which seeks another substance, forces its way to it, and, when united, gives birth to a third. Believe me, this is a fragment of the earliest history of the human species. The intermediate links you must find out for yourself. He who cannot discover them will not be the wiser though he were told them. Our scientific men* are rather too fond of details. They count out to us the whole consistency of the earth in separate lots, and are so happy as to have a different name for every lot. That is argil (*thonerde;*) that is quartz (*kieselerde;*) that is this, and that is that. But what am I the better if I am ever so perfect in all these names? When I hear them I always think of the lines in Faust—

> '*Encheiresin naturæ* nenut's die Chemie
> Bohrt sich selber Esel und weist nicht wie (9)!'

"What am I the better for these lots? what for their names? I want to know what it is that impels† every several portion of the universe to seek out some other portion, either to rule or to obey it, and qualifies some for the one part and some for the other, according to a law innate in them all, and operating like a voluntary choice. But this is precisely the point upon which the most perfect and universal silence prevails."

"Every thing in science," said he at another time,‡ with the same turn of thought, "is become too much divided into compartments. In our professors' chairs the several provinces (*Fächer*) are violently and arbitrarily severed, and allotted out into half-yearly courses of lectures, according to fixed plans.

* *Naturforscher*—investigators of nature.—*Transl.*

† See Goethe's conversation with me on occasion of Wieland's death, and especially what he so instructively discusses concerning Monads, or the ultimate simplest elements of all existences.

‡ February 9th, 1809.

"The number of real discoveries is small, especially when one views them consecutively through a few centuries. Most of what these people are so busy about is mere repetition of what has been said by this or that celebrated predecessor. Such a thing as independent original knowledge is hardly thought of. Young men are driven in flocks into lecture-rooms, and are crammed, for want of any real nutriment, with quotations and words. The insight, which is wanting to the teacher, the learner is to get for himself as he may. No great wisdom or acuteness is necessary to perceive that this is an entirely mistaken path.

"If the professor is master of a complete scientific apparatus, so far from mending the matter, it is all the worse. Then there is no end of the confusion and darkness. Every dyer at his copper, every apothecary at his retort, must come to school to him. The poor devils of practical operative men! I can't express how I pity them for falling into such hands! Once on a time there was a worthy old dyer in Heilbronn who was wiser than they all; but for that very reason they laughed him to scorn. What would I give that the old master were still in this world—the world which he knew, though it knew not him—and could see my Doctrine of Colours. That man's copper was his teacher; he *knew* how things were brought to pass.

"If I were to write down the sum of all that is worth knowing in the various sciences with which I have employed myself throughout my life, the manuscript would be so small that you might carry it home in your pocket in the cover of a letter. We cultivate science, either as a means of gaining bread, or for the purpose of formally dissecting it in the lecture-room; so that the only choice left to us poor Germans is between a shallow superficial 'popular philosophy,' or an unintelligible *galimathias* of transcendental phrases. The chapter of electricity is that which in modern

times has, according to my judgment, been handled the best.

"Euclid's Elements still remain an unrivalled model of a course of scientific instruction. In their perfect simplicity, and in the necessary ascending gradation of the problems, they show us how all sciences should be entered upon and pursued.

"What enormous sums have been squandered by manufacturers in consequence of false notions of chemistry! Even the technical arts are very far from being as advanced as they ought to be. This book-and-closet knowledge; this wise-being, and wise-making, out of quires of stuff, copied from hand to hand, is the sole cause why the number of really useful discoveries is so small.

"If, on this very day, which we date the twenty-ninth of February, 1809, the venerable old English friar Bacon (who is by no means to be confounded with his namesake, Chancellor Verulam,) after the lapse of so many centuries since his scientific labours, were to rise from the dead, walk into my study, and courteously ask me to make him acquainted with the discoveries which have been made in arts and sciences since his time, I should feel somewhat ashamed, and should not know very well what to answer the good old man. If it occurred to me to show him a solar microscope, he would instantly point to a passage in his works, in which he not only anticipated this invention, but paved the way to it by positive and practical suggessions. Should our conversation fall on the invention of watches, he would perhaps very composedly say, if I showed him mine, 'Aye, that's the thing; but it does not come upon me unexpectedly. In page 504 of my works you will find the practicability of such machines set forth; where I have likewise treated at length of the solar microscope and the camera obscura.'

"At last, after a complete review of modern inven-

tions, I must perhaps expect that the deep-thinking friar would take leave of me in the following words:

" 'What you have effected in the course of so many centuries is truly not so very considerable. Bestir yourselves better. I shall now lay me down to sleep again, and at the end of four hundred years more I will return and see whether you too are still asleep, or whether you have made greater progress in anv branch of science!'

" With us Germans," continued Goethe, " all things go on very slowly. Twenty years ago, when I gave out the first idea of the Metamorphosis of Plants, in their criticisms on this work, people could find nothing to remark but the simple method of stating a scientific subject, which might perhaps serve as a very useful model to young people. Of the value of a fundamental law, from the development of which (in case it were substantiated) every thing in the work followed, and which admitted of the widest and most manifold application to the works of nature, I never had the good fortune to hear a single word. The reason is, that they can't find it in Linneus,—whom they transcribe and serve up again to their pupils.

" Every thing proves that men are made for Faith, and not for Sight. The time will come when they will believe in me, and quote me as authority for this and that. I had rather, however, they would assert their right, and open their *own* eyes, so that they might see what lies before them: as it is, they only mock at those who have better eyes than themselves, and are extremely offended if one accuses them of purblindness in their professorial views of things.

" The same remark is equally applicable to the Doctrine of Colours, which rests on one and the same principle as the Metamorphosis of Plants (10.) They will however soon appropriate the results of these speculations. One must give them time,—and especially not take it ill when they pilfer what one does

without acknowledging it (as has frequently happened to me in the Metamorphosis of Plants,) and expose foreign wares as their own.

"As to Friar Bacon, extraordinary as was his appearance, it ought not to excite wonder in us. We know that rich germs of civilization showed themselves in England at a very early period. The conquest of that island by the Romans possibly laid the first foundation for its superiority. Such traces as they left are not so easily effaced as people think. At a later period Christianity made early and remarkable progress there. St. Boniface landed in Britain with a gospel in one hand, and a carpenter's rule in the other. He afterwards passed over to us in Thuringia, bringing in his train the arts of building. Bacon lived at a time at which the burgher class had already acquired important privileges by means of Magna Charta. The freedom of the seas, and of civil institutions, perfected what had been so happily begun. It was almost impossible that, under so many favourable circumstances, the sciences should remain in a backward state; that they should not also bound forward in the common race; which they truly did in the person of Bacon. This intelligent monk, as far removed from superstition as from unbelief, had a forecast of every thing, though he did not realize it. The whole magic of nature, in the noblest sense of the word, was opened to him. He saw all that was to come—that *must* come; the solar microscope, the clock, the camera obscura, the projection of shadows; in short, from the appearance of this one man might be inferred what mighty strides in the empire of invention, art, and science, the people to whom he belonged were destined to make.

"Press but ever onward," added Goethe with fervid animation, "youthful German people, and weary not in your progress on the way we have entered upon! Give yourselves up to no mannerism,—to no one-sided-

ness of any kind, under what name soever it finds its way among you. Know that whatever severs us from nature is false. The path of nature is that in which you must tread, if you would meet Bacon, Homer, and Shakspeare. On all sides there is much to do. See but with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears. Lastly, let not the hostility of men trouble you. We also have fared no better. In the centre of Thuringia, on the firm land, have we built our good ship; now are the floods come, and have borne it thence. Even now will many a one who knows the flat country wherein we moved, not believe that the floods have really risen to the tops of the mountains;—and yet of a truth are they there.

"Scorn not, in your efforts, to accept the co-operation of like-minded friends; on the other hand, I exhort you (also after my own example) to lose no moment with men to whom ye belong not, and who belong not to you: for such can profit little, while in the course of our lives they may cause us many annoyances; and their intercourse is at best but vain and useless.

"In the first volume of Herder's 'Ideas towards a Philosophy of the History of Man' are many notions which belong to me, especially at the beginning. These subjects were at that time thoroughly discussed between us. What led to this was that I was always more disposed to an examination of nature through the senses, than Herder, who continually wanted to hasten to the result, and grasped at the idea while I had hardly got through the observation; but it was just this reciprocal stimulus that made us mutually profitable."

Another time—it was in the summer of 1809—one afternoon, I called on Goethe, and found him sitting in the garden enjoying the mild weather. Katz (10) the landscape painter, for whom he had a singular regard, was also there. Goethe set at a small garden

table; before him stood a long-necked glass, in which a small live snake was moving about with great vivacity; he fed it with a quill, and made daily and minute observations upon it. He maintained that it knew him already, and raised its head to the edge of the glass, as soon as he came in sight.

"What splendid, intelligent eyes!" said he. "A great deal was half finished in this head, but the awkward writhing body would not allow much to come of it. Nature, too, has cheated this long, ensheathed organization of hands and feet; though this head and these eyes might well have deserved both. Indeed she frequently leaves such debts unpaid, at least for the moment, though sometimes she afterwards pays them under more favourable circumstances. The skeletons of many marine animals clearly show, that, when she made them, she was full of the thought of some higher race of land animals. Very often, working in an ungenial and intractable element, she was obliged to content herself with a fish's tail where she evidently would have liked to give a pair of hind feet into the bargain—nay, even where the rudiments of them are clearly to be discerned in the skeleton."

Near the glass which contained the snake, lay some chrysalids of caterpillars, whose forthcoming Goethe was expecting. They showed a remarkable mobility —sensible to the touch. Goethe took them off the table, watched them eagerly and attentively, and then said to his boy; "Carry them in doors; they will hardly come out to-day. It is too late now." It was four in the afternoon.

At this moment Frau von Goethe came into the garden.

Goethe took the chrysalids out of the boy's hand and laid them again upon the table.

"How magnificent that fig-tree is, in leaf and blossom," exclaimed Frau von Goethe to us from a con-

siderable distance, as she advanced towards us along the middle walk of the garden.

After greeting me and receiving my salutations in return, she immediately asked me, whether I had gone close to the fig-tree to admire it. "We will not forget," said she, at the same time addressing herself to Goethe, "to have it matted next winter."

Goethe smiled and said, "Let yourself be shown the fig-tree—and that directly,—or we shall have no peace this evening. And it really is worth seeing, and deserves to be handsomely dealt with and provided for."

"What is the name of this exotic plant," resumed Frau von Goethe, "which a man lately brought us from Jena?"

"Do you mean the great hellebore?"

"Yes, it thrives admirably."

"I am glad of it. We shall make a second Anticyra of this place, in time."

"There, I see, lie the chrysalids—have you seen nothing yet?"

"I laid them there for you. Do listen, I beg of you:" (taking them again in his hand and holding them to his ear) "how it knocks; how it jumps; and *will* burst forth into life. Wonderful would I fain call these transitions of nature, were not the wonderful in nature the most usual and ordinary. But we must not omit to let our friend here partake of this sight. To-morrow, or the day after to-morrow, the butterfly will probably be here, and a prettier, more elegant thing you have seldom seen in your life. I know the caterpillar, and I summon you to attend to-morrow afternoon, at the same hour, in the garden, if you have a mind to see something more remarkable, than the most remarkable, of all the remarkable things, Kotzebue saw on his long journey to Tobolk, in the 'most

remarkable years of his life.'* Mean while let us put the box in which our yet unknown beautiful sylph lies enclosed, and decks herself in all her splendour for to-morrow, into a sunny window in the summer-house."

"So, there you stand, my nice, pretty child. Nobody will interrupt you in this corner, nor disturb you while you are completing your toilet."

"Well for my part," said Frau von Goethe, casting a side glance at the snake, "I could not endure such a nasty thing as that near me, still less feed it with my own hands. It is such a disagreeable creature! It makes me shudder to look at it."

"Hold your tongue," replied Goethe, though tranquil as he was himself, he was generally not displeased at this vivacity of expression in those around him.

"Yes," added he, turning to me, "if the snake would but spin himself a house, and turn into a butterfly to oblige her, we should hear no more about 'nasty things.' But, dear child, we can't all be butterflies, nor fig-trees decked with flowers and fruit. Poor snake! they despise you! They should treat you better. How he looks at me! How he rears his head! Is it not as if he knew that I was taking his part? Poor thing! How he is pent up there, and cannot come forth, how fain soever he be! Doubly —I mean—first in the glass, and then in the scaly case in which nature has enclosed him."

As he said this, he began to lay aside his reed pencil and the drawing paper on which he had made some strokes towards a fantastic landscape, without seeming the least interrupted by the conversation.

The servant brought water, and while he was washing his hands, he said, "To return once more to Katz,

* "*Die merkwürdigsten Jahre meines Lebens.*" The title of Kotzebue's book.—*Transl.*

the painter, whom you must have met as you came in; the sight of him is most agreeable and refreshing to me. He is exactly the same in every respect in Weimar as he was in the Villa Borghese. Every time I see him, it is as if he brought a bit of the *dolce far niente* of the Roman atmosphere of art, into my presence. As he is here, I will arrange a little scrap-book of my drawings. We constantly talk a great deal too much. We ought to talk less and draw more. I, for my part, should be glad to break myself of talking altogether, and speak like creative nature, only in pictures. That fig-tree, this little snake, the chrysalis that lies there on the window, quietly awaiting its new existence—all these are pregnant Signatures; indeed he who could decipher them might well afford to dispense with the Written or the Spoken. The more I reflect upon it, the more it strikes me that there is something so useless, so idle, I could almost say so buffoonish in talk, that one is awe-strieken before the deep solemn repose and silence of nature, as soon as one stands withdrawn into oneself, and confronted with her, before some massive wall of rock, or in the solitude of some venerable mountain.

"I have brought together a number of varieties of plants and flowers," said he, pointing to the fantastic drawing before him, "strangely enough here, on this piece of paper. These spectres might be yet more wild and fantastic, and the question might still remain, whether the originals of them are not actually to be found in some part of the world or other.

"In design, the soul gives utterance to some portion of her inmost being; and the highest mysteries of creation are precisely those which, (as far as relates to their fundamental plan,) rest entirely on design and modelling;* these are the language in which she reveals them.

* *Zeichnung und Plastic.* It might be Englished, Outline and Form.—*Transl.*

The combinations in this field are so infinite, that they afford a place even for the exercise of humour. I will take only the parasitical plants; how much of the fantastic, the burlesque, the bird-like, is contained in their fleeting characters! Their flying seeds perch like butterflies on some tree, and feed upon it till the plant is full-grown. Thus, rooted in the very bark, we find the misseltoe, from which bird-lime is made, growing like a branch out of the pear-tree. Here, not content with fastening itself as a guest, it forces the pear-tree to supply its very wood out of its own substance.

"The moss on trees, which is also a parasite, belongs to the same class. I have some very fine preparations of this tribe of plants, which undertake nothing on their own account, but deposit themselves in all directions on something that comes ready to their hand. I will show you them at some favourable opportunity. Remind me of it. The peculiar construction of the rooty part of certain shrubs, which also belong to the parasitical class, is explained by the ascent of the sap, which is not drawn (according to the common course of nature) from a rude earthy matter, but from one already organized and fashioned.

"No apple grows from the middle of the trunk, where all is rough and woody. A long series of years, and the most careful training, are necessary to transform the apple-tree into a fruitful, succulent tree, send-forth blossom and then fruit. Every apple is a globular compact mass, and, as such, requires both a great concentration, and at the same time an uncommon refining and perfecting of the juices which flow into it from all sides.

"Figure to yourself Nature, how she sits, as it were at a card-table, incessantly calling '*au double!*' *i. e.* exulting in what she has already won, through every region of her operations; and thus plays on into infini-

tude. Animal, vegetable, mineral, are continually set up anew after some such fortunate throws; and who knows, whether the whole race of man is any thing more than a throw for some higher stake."

During this agreeable conversation, evening had closed in; and as it was grown too cool for the garden, we went up stairs into the sitting-room. Some time after, we were standing at the window. The sky was thick-sown with stars. The chords in Goethe's soul, which the open air of the garden and the works of nature had struck, still quivered, and during the whole evening their vibration was not stilled.

"All is so vast," said he to me, "that an end—a cessation of existence—is nowise to be thought of. Or do you think it possible that the all-creating Sun may be entirely effete with the production of his own planetary system; and that his earth-and-moon-creating power may be either entirely gone out of him, or lie utterly inactive and useless? I can by no means believe this. It appears to me extremely probable that, beyond Mercury, which is already small enough, a still smaller star will some time or other become visible. We see, it is true, from the position of the planets, that the projectile power of the Sun is notably decreased; since the greatest masses in the system are at the greatest distance from him. In this way, to pursue our inference, the time may come that the projectile force may be so exhausted, that the attempted projection of a planet may miss. If the Sun cannot sever and cast off the young planet to a proper distance, like its predecessors, he will, perhaps, have a ring like Saturn's form itself around him, which being composed of earthy particles, would reduce us poor earth-inhabitants to a sad condition. And, indeed, the shadow of such a ring would produce a not very cheering effect upon all the other planets of our system. The genial influence of light and heat must naturally

be greatly diminished by it, and all organizations whose development is their work, must in their several degrees be cramped and stunted by it.

"On this view of the subject, the spots in the Sun might certainly cause us some uneasiness for the future. Thus much is certain, that, at least, in all that we know of the past history and the laws of our own planet, there is nothing to prevent the formation of a solar ring, though, to be sure, it would be difficult to assign any time for such an event."

On calling on Goethe at three o'clock in the afternoon, I found him serious and thoughtful. He was busied in sorting a collection of coins.

To a true observer of nature like Goethe, it gave no little pleasure when he lighted upon a face among his coins, the features of which expressed the peculiar character or acts of the person, such as they are handed down to us by history.

With his collection of natural curiosities he went to work in the same manner. How to catch nature, so to speak, in the fact;—this was the point to which all his observations, all his speculations, were directed. The smallest object acquired importance and interest in his eyes, viewed from this side. Especially organic remains of a world which has partly perished.

Whoever wished to recommend himself to him for ever, needed only to bring him some such specimen from his travels. The paw of an arctic bear or of a beaver, the tooth of a lion, the strangely twisted horn of a chamois or a deer, or any other object differing in part or wholly from familiar forms and organizations, sufficed to delight him for days and weeks and to furnish him with matter for repeated observations.

When he obtained possession of such a treasure, it was as if he had received a letter from a friend in some far distant quarter of the globe; in the joy of his heart he immediately hastened in the most engaging

manner to share with others its contents, which he had such singular felicity in decyphering.

He laid down the proposition, that Nature, accidentally, and as it were against her will, became the tell-tale of her own secrets. That every thing was told—at least once; only not in the time and place at which we looked for, or suspected it; we must collect it here and there, in all the nooks and corners in which she had let it drop. Hence the Mysterious, the Sybiline, the Incoherent, in our observations of nature. That she was a book of the vastest, strangest contents, from which, however, we might gather, that many of its leaves lay scattered around in Jupiter, Uranus, and other planets. To come at the whole, would be difficult, if not utterly impossible. On this difficulty, therefore, must all systems suffer shipwreck.

CHAPTER IV.

Goethe's philosophical views.—Wieland's funeral.—Its effect on Goethe.—His opinion of Wieland.—Of the immortality of the soul.—Of personal identity.—Of Monades, or primary germs of beings.—Swedenborg.—Goethe's aversion to dogs.—His address to one.—Reminiscences of previous states of existence.—Herder's opinion on that subject.—Knowledge and faith.—Goethe's sensibility.—Destiny and duty of man.—Goethe's "Prometheus."—Goethe's views of history.—Capital cities.—Systems of philosophy.—Effect of natural tendency.—Attempts to popularize philosophy.—Popular clamours.—Idea of a universal church.

This same concatenation, which is only hidden from our short or purblind sight by its abundance and extent, and which Goethe traced in all the productions of nature with a loving and a divining eye, he also detected in the labyrinthine depths and forms of the spiritual world. As an illustration of his views, I make choice of two conversations with him; one on the immortality of the soul, and one on political institutions, as affording evidence how much the peculiar development of his mind was in conformity with nature.

On the day of Wieland's funeral, of which I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter, I remarked such a solemn tone in Goethe's whole manner, as we were seldom accustomed to see in him. There was something so softened, I might almost say melancholy, about him; his eyes frequently glistened; even his voice, his manner of speaking, were different from what was usual.

This might possibly be the cause that our conversation took a direction towards the super-sensual, for which Goethe commonly showed a repugnance, if not a contempt: completely on principle, as it appears to me; for it was more consonant with his natural disposition rather to confine himself to the present, and to all agreeable and beautiful objects which nature and art offer to the eye and the observation, in paths accessible to us.

Our departed friend was naturally the principal subject of our conversation. Without deviating greatly from its current, I asked him on one occasion, when he spoke of the continuance of existence after death, as a thing of course, "And what do you think is at this moment the occupation of Wieland's soul?"

"Nothing petty, nothing unworthy, nothing out of keeping with that moral greatness which he all his life sustained," was the reply.

"But not to be misunderstood; as we have entered on this subject, I must go somewhat deeper into it.

"It is something to have passed a life of eighty years in unblemished dignity and honour; it is something to have attained to that pitch of refined wit, of tender, elegant thought, which predominated so delightfully in Wieland's soul; it is something to have possessed that industry, that iron persistency and perseverance, in which he surpassed us all."

"Would not you willingly assign him a place near his Cicero, with whom he busied himself so cheerfully up to the time of his death?"

Don't interrupt me, when I am trying to give to the course of my ideas a perfect and calm development. *The destruction of such high powers of soul is a thing that never, and under no circumstances, can even come into question**. Nature is not such a prodigal spendthrift of her capital. Wieland's soul is one of Natures

* These words are thus distinguished in the original.—*Transl.*

treasures; a perfect jewel. What adds to this is, that his long life had increased, not diminished, these noble intellectual endowments. Again, I entreat you, think attentively on this circumstance. Raphael was scarcely thirty, Kepler scarcely forty, when they suddenly terminated their respective lives, while Wieland—"

"How," interrupted I with some surprise, "do you speak of dying as if it were a spontaneous act?"

"That I often allow myself to do," replied he; "and if you are pleased to consider it under a different aspect, I will (since at this moment I may be permitted to do so) tell you my thoughts upon the subject from the very bottom."

I begged him most earnestly not to withhold any of his opinions from me.

"You have long known," resumed he, "that ideas which are without a firm foundation in the sensible world, whatever be their value in other respects, bring with them no conviction to me; for that, in what concerns the operations of nature, I want to *know*, not merely to conjecture or to believe. With regard to the individual existence of the soul after death, my course has been as follows:

"This hypothesis stands in no sort of contradiction with the observations of many years, which I have made on the constitution of our own species, and of all other existences; on the contrary, they furnish fresh evidence in its support.

"But how much, or how little, of this individual existence is worthy to endure is another question, and a point we must leave to the Deity. At present I will only make this preliminary remark. I assume various classes and orders of the primary elements of all existences, as the germs of all phenomena in nature; these I would call souls, since from them proceeds the animation or vivification of the whole. Or rather *monades*:—Let us always stick to that Leibnitzian term; a better can scarcely be found, to express the

simplicity of the simplest existence. Now, as experience shows us, some of these monades or germs are so small, so insignificant, that they are, at the highest, adapted only to a subordinate use and being. Others, again, are strong and powerful. These latter, accordingly, draw into their sphere all that approaches them, and transmute it into something belonging to themselves; *i. e.* into a human body, into a plant, an animal, or, to go higher still, into a star. This process they continue till the small or larger world, whose completion lies predestined in them, at length comes bodily into light. Such alone are, I think, properly to be called *souls*. Hence it follows, that there are monades of worlds, souls of worlds; as well as monades of ants and souls of ants; and that both are, if not of identical, of cognate origin.

"Every sun, every planet, bears within itself the germ of a higher fulfilment, in virtue of which its development is as regular, and must take place according to the same laws, as the development of a rose-tree, by means of leaf, stalk, and flower. You may call the germ an idea,* or a monad, as you please; I have no objection. Enough that it is invisible, and antecedent to the visible external development. We must not be misled by the *larvæ* or imperfect forms of the intermediate states which this idea or germ may assume in its transitions. One and the same metamorphosis, or capacity of transformation in nature, produces a rose out of a leaf, a caterpillar out of an egg, and again a butterfly out of the caterpillar.

"The inferior monades, too, belong to a superior because they must, not because it particularly conduces to their pleasure. This takes place in general naturally enough. Let us observe this hand, for instance. It contains parts which are every moment at the service of that chief monas, which had the

* Idea is here used in the Platonic sense.—*Transl.*

power, at their first rise into being, to attach them to itself. By means of them I can play this or that piece of music; I can make my fingers fly as I will over the keys of the piano-forte. They certainly thus procure me a delightful intellectual pleasure: but they are deaf; it is the chief monas alone that hears. I may therefore presume that my hand, or my fingers, are little, or not at all, interested in my playing. The exercise of monades, by means of which I procure for myself an enjoyment, is very little for the good of my subjects; unless, perhaps, that it tires them.

"How much better off they would be as to sensual enjoyment, could they, instead of idly roaming over the keys of my piano, fly about the meadows like busy bees, perch in a tree, or revel among its blossoms; and doubtless the materials for all this exist in them. The moment of death, which is thence most appropriately called *dissolution*, is that in which the chief or ruling monas dismisses all those subordinate monades which have hitherto been faithful vassals in her service. I therefore regard the quitting life, as well as the rising into it, as a spontaneous act of this chief monas; which, from its very constitution, is utterly unknown to us.

"All monades are by nature so indestructible, that even in the moment of dissolution they do not abate or lose any thing of their activity, but continue their progress uninterruptedly. They quit their old connexions only to enter into new ones at the same instant. At the change, all depends upon the degree of strength of the germ of fulfilment contained in this or that monas. Whether the Monas be that of a cultivated human soul, of a beaver, of a bird, or of a fish, makes an immense difference. And here, as soon as we desire to explain to ourselves in any degree the phenomena of nature, we come to the class or order of the souls which we are compelled to assume. Swedenborg examined into this in his peculiar manner, and

employs an image for the illustration of his thoughts, than which a more felicitous one could not, perhaps, be found. He likens the abode in which souls dwell to a space divided into three main chambers, in the centre of which is a large hall. We will assume now, that out of these three chambers various sorts of creatures, as for instance, fishes, birds, dogs, cats, &c. repair into the large hall; certainly a very mixed company! What would be the immediate consequence? The pleasure of being together would soon be at an end. Sudden and violent friendships would give place to more violent quarrels; at length like would consort with like; fish with fish, bird with bird, dog with dog, and cat with cat; and each of these several kinds would endeavour, if possible, to get possession of a separate chamber. Here we have the full and true history of our monades, and of their departure from this earth. Each monas goes to the place whither it belongs; into the water, into the air, into the fire, into the stars; nay, the mysterious attraction which draws it thither, involves at the same time the secret of its future destination.

"Annihilation is utterly out of the question; but the possibility of being caught on the way by some more powerful, and yet baser monas, and subordinated to it,—this is unquestionably a very serious consideration; and I, for my part, have never been able entirely to divest myself of the fear of it, in the way of a mere observation of nature."

At this moment, a dog was heard repeatedly barking in the street. Goethe, who had a natural antipathy to dogs, sprang hastily to the window, and called out to it, "Take what form you will, vile larva, you shall not subjugate me!"* A most strange and

* I find this passage about dogs in the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*. The latter part is amusing to those who have had the luck to be waked in the night by the "*ungeheure Ton*," as Goethe most

astounding address to any one unacquainted with the trains of Goethe's thoughts; but to those familiar with them, a burst of humour singularly well-timed and appropriate.

justly calls it, of the nocturnal horn he mentions. I once heard it in a most obscure little town in Franconia, just on the borders of the Black Forest, in which every thing was of a piece—antique, primitive, and catholic. The sound of the horn under my window, startling me out of the sleep that follows on a whole day's travelling, I shall not soon forget. After his blast, the watchman recited four lines—a sort of invocation or blessing, which was clearly a remnant of the middle ages. I jumped up and opened my window to hear it, and only regret I did not write it down.

What follows happened to Goethe in Gottingen. After bitter complaints of the zeal and assiduity of the young lady of the house in which he lodged, in practising music, especially at night, he adds—

"Other noises, of a different kind, gave cause for desperation: a number of dogs collected around the corner house, and their incessant barking was insupportable. To drive them away, I seized upon the first missile that came to hand, and in this way many a *Cornu Ammonis* of the Heinberg, carefully collected by my son, flew out of the window at these unwelcome rest-breakers:—and generally in vain. For when we thought we had scared them all away the barking continued just as before. At last we discovered that a great dog, belonging to the house in which we lodged, placed himself upright at a window over our heads, and thence held up a conversation with his friends.

"But this was not all; I was waked out of a deep sleep by the monstrous tone of a horn, which sounded exactly as if it was blowing between the curtains of my bed. A watchman had his station under my window, where he diligently discharged this part of his functions. And thus I was doubly and trebly unhappy; for all his colleagues, at all the corners of the streets which led to ours, answered him, proving to us by the most frightful and alarming noises that they were keeping watchful guard over the tranquillity of our slumbers.

"Now awaked my morbid irritability of nerves—and nothing was left for it but to enter into a negotiation with the police, which had the extraordinary courtesy and kindness to put to silence first one, and then several other, of these horns, at the desire of the odd stranger, who was very near playing the part of

"This rabble of creation," resumed he, after a pause, and somewhat more calmly, "is extremely offensive. It is a perfect pack of monades with which we are

the uncle in Humphrey Clinker, whose impatient irritability was goaded to madness by the sound of hunting horns."

This little corroborative poem is from the *Elegien*.

Manche Töne sind mir Verdruss, doch bleibet am meisten
Hundegebell mir verhasst; kläffend zerreisst es mein Ohr.
Einen Hund nur hör' ich sehr oft mit frohem Behagen
Bellend kläffen, den Hund, den sieh der Nachbar erzog.
Denn er bellte mir einst mein Mädchen an, da sie sich heimlich
Zu mir stahl, und verrieth unser Geheimniss beinah'.
Jetzo, hör' ich ihn bellen, so denk ich nur immer: sie kommt wohl!
Oder ich denke der Zeit, da die Erwartete kam.

TRANSLATION.

Many sounds are an annoyance to me, but above all is the barking of dogs hateful—yelping it splits my ear. One dog alone do I hear very often with joyful delight, yelp barking; the dog which my neighbour has reared. For once he barked at my maiden when she privily stole to me, and almost he betrayed our secret. Now, when I hear him bark, I think always—then she is coming! or I think of the time when the expected one came.

Here, too, is one of his Epigrams:

Wundern kann es mich nicht das Menschen die Hunde so lieben;
Denn ein erbärmlicher Schuft ist, wie der Mensch, so der Hund.

TRANSLATION.

It cannot surprise me that men love dogs so much;
For dog, like man, is a pitiful sneaking rogue.

thrown together in this planetary nook; their company will do us little honour with the inhabitants of other planets, if they happen to hear any thing about them."

I asked him whether he believed that the transition from their actual state and circumstances into others, were accompanied with consciousness in the monades themselves.

To which Goethe replied; "That monades may be capable of a general historical retrospect, I will not dispute, any more than that there may be among them higher natures than ourselves. The progress of the monas of a world can and will elicit many things out of the dark bosom of its memory, which seem like divinations, though they be at bottom only dim recollections of some foregone state; just as human genius discovered the laws concerning the origin of the universe, not by dry study but by a lightning flash of recollection glowing on the darkness; because itself was a party to their composition. It would be presumption to set bounds to such flashes in the memory of spirits of a higher order, or to attempt to determine at what point this illumination must stop. Thus, universally and historically viewed, the permanent individual existence of the monas of a world appears to me by no means inconceivable.

As to what more nearly concerns ourselves, it seems to me as if the former states or circumstances through which we and our planets have passed, were too insignificant and mean, for much of it to have been, in the eyes of Nature, worthy to be remembered again. Even the circumstances of our present condition would stand in need of great selection, and our chief monas will, at some future time, grasp the whole of it at once, and summarily; *i. e.* in one grand historic point."

This expression of Goethe's recalled to me something similar which Herder once said concerning the

soul, when he was greatly out of humour and out of spirits with the world.

"We are now standing," said that immortal man, "face to face in the church-yard of St. Peter and St. Paul, and I hope we shall stand face to face in like manner in Uranus; but God forbid that I should carry with me the history of my sojourn here in these streets, lying on the Ilm, in all its minutest details! I, for my part, should regard such a gift as the greatest torment and punishment."

"If we give ourselves up to our conjectures," said Goethe, continuing his remarks, "I really do not see what should prevent the monas to which we are indebted for Wieland's appearance on our planet, from forming in its new state the highest combinations this universe can present. By its industry, by its zeal, by its high intellect, which enabled it to master so large a portion of the history of the world, it has a claim to every thing. I should be little surprised, inasmuch as I should find it entirely agreeable to my views of the subject, if thousands of years hence I were to meet this same Wieland as the monas of a world; as a star of the first magnitude; were to see him, and be witness how he quickened and cheered every thing that approached him by his beautiful light. To fashion the misty substance of some comet into light and clearness—that were truly a welcome, gladsome task for the monas of our Wieland; as indeed, speaking generally, if we suppose the eternity of the actual state of the world, we can admit no other destination for monades, than, as blessed co-operating Powers, to share eternally in the immortal joys of gods. The work of creation is entrusted to them. Called or uncalled, they flock together of themselves; on every way, from all mountains, out of all seas, from all stars;—who may stop them?—I am certain, as you here see me, that I have been there a thousand times already, and hope to return thither a thousand times again."

"Pardon me," interrupted I, "I know not whether I should call a return* without consciousness a return: for he only *comes* AGAIN who knows that he has been in the same place before. During your observations of nature, gleamy recollections, and points of light from another state of the world, at which your monas was perhaps itself a co-operating agent, may have burst upon you; but all this rests only upon a *perhaps;* I wish we were in a condition to attain to greater certainty on matters of such moment, than we can obtain for ourselves through dim divinations, and those flashes of genius which sometimes lighten the dark abyss of creation. If we can come no nearer to our object; were we only to figure to ourselves One Loving Chief Monas as the central point of creation, which ruled all subordinate monades of this universe, in the same manner as our soul rules the inferior monades subordinate to her?"

"Against this conception, considered as Faith, I have nothing to say," replied Goethe; "only I am accustomed to attach no extraordinary value to ideas which have no foundation in sensible perceptions. Aye, indeed, if we did but know the structure of our own brain; and its connexion with Uranus; and the thousand-fold intersecting threads along which thought runs hither and thither. But then we should not be conscious of the flashes of thought till they struck. We know only ganglions, portions of the brain; of the nature of the brain itself we know as much as nothing. What then can we pretend to know of God? Diderot has been greatly censured for saying, If there *is* not a God, yet, perhaps, there will be one.† Accord-

* There is an awkwardness here from our half Latin word, for again- or back-coming. *Wiederkunft* is a compound of *again* and *coming*, and consequently in the next sentence may be severed for the purpose of analysis with perfect convenience. I am obliged to use two different words, which destroys the sentence.—*Transl.*

† I cannot find this expression in Diderot, nor can any one tell me

ing to my views of nature and her laws, however, one may very easily conceive of planets out of which the higher monades have already taken their departure, or in which they have not yet been called into activity. A constellation is required, such as is not to be had every day, to dissipate the waters and to dry up the land. As there are planets for man, there may just as well be planets for fishes or for birds.

"In one of our former conversations, I called man the first dialogue that nature held with God. I have not the least doubt that this dialogue may, in other planets, be kept up in a language far higher, deeper, and more significant. At present we are deficient in a thousand of the requisite kinds of knowledge. The very first that is wanting to us is self-knowledge; after this come all the others. Strictly considered, I *can* know nothing of God but what the very limited horizon of sensible perceptions on this planet affords ground for: and that, on all points, is little enough. Hereby, however, *it is by no means asserted, that, by this limitation of our observations on outward nature,*

where it is to be met with. I am the more sorry for this, because it would be important to see the very word Diderot uses—whether or not it be "*existera*."

For neither we nor the French have any word corresponding to that which Goethe uses—viz. *werden*,—which signifies not only a future existence, but a progress in or towards it. The Latin *fiet* would exactly answer to the German. A friend has pointed out to me the following curious coincidence.

Southey, in his *Omniana*, (p. 262.) mentions "a *philosopher*" who held this opinion. "He was perfectly satisfied that there is no God at present, but he believed there would be one by and by: for, as the organization of the universe perfected itself, a universal mind, he argued, would be the result. This he called the system of progressive nature. He explained it to me with great zeal, when we were walking over the very ground where, thirteen years afterwards, the battle of Coruña was fought. Light lie the earth upon him! He was a kind-hearted man, and all his wishes were for the welfare and improvement of mankind; but it had been well for him if his other intellectual vagaries had produced as little mischief as his system of progressive nature."

*limits are likewise set to our Faith. On the contrary, the case may easily be, that by the immediateness of divine feeling in us, Knowledge must necessarily appear as a patch-work; especially on a planet which, wrenched out of its connexion with the Sun, leaves imperfect all observation, which therefore receives its full completion by Faith alone.** I have already taken occasion to remark in the "*Farbenlehre*," that there are primary phenomena, which, in their god-like simplicity, we ought not to distrust and disparage by useless inquiries, but leave to Reason and to Faith. Let us endeavour to press forward courageously from both sides, only let us keep the boundaries which sever them rigidly distinct. Let us not attempt to demonstrate what cannot be demonstrated! Sooner or later, we shall otherwise make our miserable deficiencies more glaring to posterity by our so called works of knowledge. Where Knowledge is full and satisfactory, indeed, we stand not in need of Faith; but where Knowledge falls short, or appears inadequate, we must not contest with Faith its rights. *As soon as we set out from the principle that Knowledge and Faith are not given to destroy each other, but to supply each other's deficiencies, we shall come near to an accurate estimate of the Right.*"

It was late to-day when I quitted Goethe. He kissed my forehead at parting, contrary to his custom. I was going down stairs in the dark, but he would not permit me, and held me fast by the arm, till he rang for some one to light me out. At the door he warned me again to take care of myself, and to be on my guard against the raw night air. Never, before nor after, did I see Goethe in a softer mood than at the time of Wieland's death.

His conversation of to-day contains the key to many of the most paradoxical, and at the same time most amiable parts of his so often misunderstood character.

* This passage is so marked in the original.—*Transl.*

The loss of Wieland rendered this last remaining friend dearer than ever to me. On my return home, I wrote down the foregoing conversation; and I worked it out into certain results which have remained not without the greatest influence on the course of my life, and which I will therefore annex as appendix to the dialogue I have here given.

It is then true, and even so extraordinary a genius as Goethe himself was constrained to make the humiliating admission, that all our knowledge on the planet we inhabit is mere botch-work! All our sensible perceptions, in all the kingdoms of nature, though conducted with the profoundest acuteness and the utmost deliberation, can as little enable us to form a perfect idea of God and of the universe, as the fish in the abysses of the deep (even supposing him endowed with reason) could emancipate himself from the influence of his conceptions, formed in that region of fins and scales of which he is an inhabitant; or, in his nether element, create to himself a complete and accurate picture of the human form.

The problem of life, if placed in Knowledge alone, must necessarily induce a sort of despairing Faust-like discontent. Restored to Faith, as to our proper element, to each, from the highest to the lowest, is allotted a circle of dignified activity, by means of which he becomes a free and co-operating portion of this magnificent whole. Nor does all that merits remembrance, in the future state of the soul, appear less worthy of notice in this view of the case. We thus soon arrive at this conclusion;—that the universal question is not only concerning a creation by art and science, but much rather concerning a creation by moral effects and actions, in strict conformity with that which the voice of heaven within us declares an indispensable duty.

To participate in the joys of creation, or in the plastic energy of nature, in the sense in which the

aspiring and presumptuous Faust desired it, is not indeed granted to us here; this sphere is closed against us, and we have only to wait humbly: but another and a higher sphere of creation, in which we are ourselves both the material and the architect, is laid open to our illumined eyes;—the emancipation of the human race from a state of animal debasement and confounding perplexity;—the regeneration of those high and heavenly impulses (restored by our own efforts to their true origin) which, with mighty arms, raise us to a heaven that seemed lost to us.

What a boundless field here opens itself! But also what a boundless struggle with antagonizing powers awaits us in this career! Even amid the hot press of human passions, to receive the injunctions of supernal love in a lowly heart and reverent ear; to live and die to and for our Faith; and, when the deceitful world totters beneath our feet, to hold fast on heaven; to be sure and steadfast in the way pointed out to us by the compass within, as the bird on his flight towards Memphis or Cairo; certain that, if there be any thing lofty, lovely, great, and of good report in the world, on this way it must be wrestled for, on this way it will be won.

The gentle humane temper—not the Titan-like defiance—of Prometheus, is the right one.

> Ich dich ehren?
> Wofür?
> Hast du die Schmerzen gelindert
> Je des beladenen?
> Hast du die Thränen gestillt
> Je des geängsteten?
> Hat nicht mich zum Manne geschmiedet
> Die allmächtige Zeit.
> Und das ewige Schicksal—
> Meine Herrn und deine? (11)

In various ways has this passage been misunderstood. Unquestionably it is not to be denied, that the

same flower which springs up full of loveliness and fragrance on the field of poetry, if injudiciously or perversely transplanted to another soil, becomes a noxious weed; especially where it takes root in a youthful mind, as a pervading principle in the field of practical endeavour.

An expression which a great poet may put into the mouth of a vicious, or passionately-excited character, is not to be regarded as truth. The predatory monades of the shark or the sword-fish, which, urged by a blind instinct, fall on one another in the depths of the sea, chase away each other's prey, and, accordingly as they are stronger or weaker, devour or are devoured, might, if they could attain to some insight into the practical part of their calling, be allowed to utter maxims like the following in full and perfect earnest:—

"Denn Recht hat jeder eigene Charakter,
Es geibt kein Unrecht als der Widerspruch."*

or,—

"Und wenn es glückt so ist es auch veziehn,
Denn jeder Ausgang ist ein Gottesurtheil."†

But man, to whom the higher laws and destinies of the world have been declared by immediate revelation, degrades himself to a class far beneath him, when he adopts principles which the angel within him must repudiate.

If I would sum up all the admirable things Goethe said on this occasion concerning Knowledge and Faith, in the shortest possible space, I could find no better way of doing so than in his own profound and significant words:—

"Wer darf ihn nennen?" &c. (12)

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* For every genuine character is right,
There is no wrong save inconsistency.

† And what succeeds is ever viewed with favour,
For prosp'rous issues are Heaven's own decisions.

It is certainly not to be denied that Goethe's view of the history of the world strikes one as rather different from that usually taught in schools and compendiums. Thus, for instance, he regards the origin of states as something which, like every other product of nature, must unfold itself instinctively and without rule, out of some independently-existing germ; to this indeed mountains, rivers, climate, and other circumstances, contribute their share. Political systems, he thought, availed as little as philosophical, whenever they were in opposition with nature.

A state can no more renounce its mountains and its rivers, than a man his character; or, in compliance with any abstract idea, prescribe to itself conditions destructive of its own being. Such perverse, absurd attempts are sure to bring their own punishment. It ought never to be forgotten that nature shows us, that it is not to the head alone, but to another part, held in less reverence by the public, that the regular hexagonal cells of the bee owe both substance and form.

The best capital cities are always those which have arisen piece by piece out of the necessity of the moment, or in the press of circumstances. Such a central point, in which the people of a tribe congregated around their king or queen, like bees around their monarch, is precisely the best; and this is most clearly proved by the experiment of capital cities which owe their origin, not to natural causes, or the inclination and convenience of the people, but are constructed after the plan of some ingenious architect. The former, notwithstanding their narrow streets and irregular architecture, have always something cheerful and attractive about them; while the others, in spite of all their regularity, after the first impression is worn off, never fail to leave a feeling of cold and repulsive monotony.

Goethe, as has been already remarked, loved nothing that was the fruit of mere study; nothing got by

rote. He maintained that all systems of philosophy must form part of our affections and of our life,* if they are to acquire any sort of practical significancy. "But do people really *live* now-a-days?" added he. "The Stoic, the Platonic, the Epicurean, each must get through with the world after his own fashion; that is, indeed, the great problem of life, from which no one, be he of what school he may, is exempt. Philosophers can furnish us with nothing but outlines. How far these outlines suit us; whether we, according to our natural constitution and endowments, are capable of filling them up in the requisite manner, that is our affair. We must try ourselves, and most carefully examine all that we receive into our minds from without by way of nutriment; otherwise either we destroy our philosophy, or our philosophy us.

"Rigid temperance and moderation, such for instance as Kant's, demanded a philosophy suited to that his natural disposition. Read his life, and you will soon find, how nicely he contrived to take off the edge of his Stoicism, which would otherwise have stood in too sharp a contrast with our state of society; how cleverly he accommodated it, and placed it in equilibrium with the world.

"Every individual has, in virtue of his natural tendencies, a right to principles which do not destroy his individuality. Here, or nowhere, is to be sought the origin of all philosophies. Zeno and the Stoics existed in Rome long before their writings were known there. That same stern character of the Romans, which fitted them to be heroes and warriors, and taught them to scorn every suffering, and to be capable of every sacrifice, necessarily secured a prompt and fa-

* *Alle Philosophie müsse geliebt und gelebt werden.* The paraphrase above is miserably diluted and feeble; the literal English is, "that all philosophers *must be loved and lived*;" the vigour and significancy of which I cannot preserve in any form of expression that would be usually acknowledged as English.—*Transl.*

vourable hearing to principles which made similar demands on the nature of man. Every system, even Cynicism, may succeed in getting through with the world, as soon as the right hero for the attempt does but present himself. Only the acquired and artificial in man is what is most apt to founder on contradictions; the innate can always make its way somehow or other, and frequently obtains a complete and triumphant conquest over all that is opposed to it.

"It is, therefore, no wonder that the refined, tender nature of Wieland inclined to the Aristippic philosophy; while, on the other hand, his decided aversion to Diogenes, and to all cynicism, may be very satisfactorily traced to the same cause. A mind in which the sense of all grace of form was instinctive, as in Wieland, cannot accommodate itself to a system which is a continuous offence against that grace. We must first be in unison with ourselves, before we are in a situation, if not wholly to resolve, at least in some degree to soften, the dissonances which press upon us from without.

"I maintain that some are even born Eclectics in philosophy; and where Eclecticism proceeds from the inward nature of the man, that too is good, and I will never make it a reproach to him. How often do we find men who are from natural disposition half Stoics and half Epicureans! It would not astonish me at all if such men adopted the principles of both systems, and tried, as far as possible, to reconcile them.

"Very different is that vacuity of mind which, from want of all independent inward bent, like a magpie, carries to its own nest every thing that may chance to come in its way from any quarter, and thus places itself, like one essentially lifeless, out of all connexion with the life-abounding whole. All such philosophies are utterly dead and worthless; for as they proceed out of no results, so neither do they lead to any results.

"Of popular philosophy I am just as little an ad-

mirer. There are mysteries in philosophy, as well as in religion. The people ought to be spared all discussions on such points; at least, they ought by no means to be forcibly dragged into them. Epicurus somewhere says, 'This is right, precisely because the people are displeased at it.' It is difficult to foresee the end of those unprofitable and unpleasing mental vagaries which have arisen among us since the reformation; from the time that the mysteries of religion were handed over to the people to be pulled about and set up as a mark for the quibbling and cavilling of all sorts of one-sided judgments. The measure of the understandings of common men is really not so great, that one needs set them such gigantic problems to solve, or choose them as judges in the last resort of such questions. The mysteries, and more especially the dogmas, of the Christian religion, are allied to subjects of the deepest and most intricate philosophy; and it is only the positive dress with which it is invested that distinguishes the former from the latter. Thence it happens, that frequently enough, according to the position a man takes up, he either calls theology a confused metaphysic, or metaphysic a confused platonic theology. Both however stand on too elevated ground for human intellect, in her ordinary sphere, to presume to flatter herself that she can reach their sacred treasures. The interpretation of them to the vulgar cannot go beyond a very narrow practical circle of action.

"The multitude, however, are never so well satisfied as when they can repeat, in a still louder tone, the loud declamations of some few who give the cry. By this process the strangest scenes are produced, and there is no end to the exhibition of presumption and absurdity. A half-educated, '*enlightened*' man often, in his shallowness and ignorance, jests on a subject before which a Jacobi, a Kant, the admitted ornaments of our country, would bow in reverential awe.

The *results* of philosophy, politics, and religion,

ought certainly to be brought home to the people; but we ought not to attempt to exalt the mass into philosophers, priests, or politicians. It is of no avail! If Protestants sought to define more clearly what ought to be loved, done, and taught; if they imposed an inviolable, reverential silence on the mysteries of religion, without compelling any man to assent to dogmas tortured, with afflicting presumption, into a conformity to this or that rule; if they carefully refrained from degrading it in the eyes of the many by ill-timed ridicule, or from bringing it into danger by indiscreet denial, I should myself be the first to visit the church of my brethren in religion, with sincere heart, and to submit myself with willing edification to the general, practical confession of a faith which connected itself so immediately with action."

CHAPTER V.

Goethe's demeanour in general society.—His boundless fancy and humour.—Anecdote of Goethe and the Grand Duke of Weimar.—Goethe as director of the theatre at Weimar.—His contempt for popular applause.—The German public.—Their interpretations of Faust.—Madame de Stael.—Her opinion of the character of the devil.—The Walpurgis sack.—Its terrors.—Suppressed scene in Faust.—Imperial discernment.—Schiller's Piccolomini and Wallenstein.—Goethe's opinion of them.—Emperors in German literature.—Their rapid succession and dethronement.—The Schlegels, Tieck, Novalis.—The Heidelberg student.

Though Goethe was habitually very cautious and temperate in the expression of his opinions in the presence of persons of uncongenial character and sentiments, it occasionally happened that, excited by some monstrous absurdity or other, he was carried away by that wild, passionate fancy which he pours forth in such rich profusion in Werther, in the "Letters from Switzerland" (*Briefe aus der Schweiz,*) and in the "Fair at Plundersweilern" (*Jahrmarkt zu Plundersweilern.*) He was then precisely like the bear in Lili's pack:

> "Kehr, ich mich um,
> Und brumm———
> Und gehe wieder eine Strecke,
> Und kehr, dort endlich wieder um." (13)

Society, art, the court, poets, politics, reviews, philosophy, the universities, every thing, in short, that was in any way connected with the inner and higher life (or at least that could establish its claims to such a connexion by words and works,) served him as a theme; and he played upon them from top to bottom of his whole gamut of growls.

Nothing could be so delightful and amusing as to hear the all-sided man suddenly become a thorough going, one-sided partisan—an inveterate, narrow bigot. In these moods he seized the world by one corner, and shook and worried it in every direction; though usually he was so afraid of disturbing or ruffling any thing, that he took it up most delicately by all four corners.

At such moments, his boundless fantastic extravagance was most captivating; but there needed only the smallest fragment of prose—of which, alas, society affords but too luxuriant a crop—to check the course of this brilliant, dashing torrent.

I remember one occasion, when Wieland read us the Knights of Aristophanes, which he had translated for his Athenæum. We were assembled at the country house of the Dowager Duchess Amelia at Tiefurth (14.) It was towards the end of autumn.

It happened that the reigning duke, who was returning from the chase, took his way through Tiefurth. He came in after the reading was begun. The evenings were chill, and there was a fire in the room. The duke, who came out of the fresh air, found it too hot and opened one of the windows. Some ladies, whose thinly covered shoulders were ill defended against the cold, sat close to the window. Goethe, observing that they suffered from the draft, instantly rose, approached the window with cautious tiptoe steps, that he might not disturb the reader, and softly shut it. The duke, mean time, had passed to the other side of the room, and his face was suddenly over-

clouded when he turned round and saw how contumaciously his commands had been resisted.

"Who has shut the window that I opened?" said he to the servants of the house; not one of whom dared to cast so much as a glance at the culprit.

Goethe, however, with that arch, reverential gravity which is peculiar to him, and at the bottom of which often lies the most refined irony, stepped forward before his master and friend, and said, "Your Highness has the power of life and death over all your subjects. Upon me let judgment and sentence be pronounced." The duke laughed, and the window was opened no more.

"There sits the monster in long sleeves, and laughs at me for being such a fool as to be out of humour with the world,—as if I did not know how things are ordered in it, and that every thing in it and upon it is covered with dirt."

With these words Goethe received me, as I walked into his garden one afternoon in August, and found him sitting in a white waistcoat on a little grassplot, under the shade of some trees.

It was Friday; there was to be a performance at the theatre on the Saturday, and an actor who was to play had just sent in his resignation, which had thrown the whole piece into utter confusion. The lateness of the notice was the thing which especially annoyed Goethe, upon whose shoulders the actor had thrown the burden, as precipitately as he had gotten rid of it from his own. Every director of a theatre is bound, as is well known, to provide, first, that there is a regular performance, and, secondly, that the public are entertained with pieces of the highest merit.

"Such *avanies*," resumed Goethe, still somewhat angrily, (while he poured out a glass of red wine, and motioned me to sit by him on the bench,) "must I now endure with patience from people who, when they come into Weimar at one gate, are looking for another at which to quit it. For this, I have been for fifty years a favourite writer of that which you are pleased to call the German nation; for this, I have had seat and voice, for twenty or thirty years, in the privy council of Weimar—at last to be at the mercy of such fellows as these!

"The devil! That I, at my time of life, should suffer such a tragi-comedy to be played, and act the principal character in it myself, I never could have conceived nor dreamt! You will tell me, I know, that all theatrical affairs are, at bottom, nothing but dirt—for you have looked far enough behind the curtain—and that, therefore, I should do well to let the whole beggarly business go its own way as soon as possible: but I must tell you, in answer, that the intrenchment which a good general defends is also dirt; yet he must not turn his back on it, unless he would have his own honour trodden in the dirt. We are not, for that, to accuse him of any predilection for dirt; and so I hope you will acquit me of any such tastes, on the same grounds."

"Posterity, more just,"—I began; but Goethe, without waiting to hear what I was going to say, interrupted me with unusual rapidity and vehemence, "I will not hear any thing of the matter; neither of the public, nor of posterity, nor of the justice, as you call it, which it is hereafter to award to my efforts. I hate my 'Tasso,' just because people say that it will 'go down to posterity;' I hate 'Iphigenie;' in a word, I hate every thing of mine that pleases the public. I know that it belongs to the day, and the day to it; but I tell you, once for all, I will not live for the day. This is the very reason why I will have nothing to do

with that Kotzebue, because I am fully determined never to waste an hour on any man who I know does not belong to me and I to him.

"Aye, indeed—if I could but manage to write a work—but I am too old for that—that would make the Germans hate and revile me heartily for the next fifty or hundred years, and say nothing but evil of me from one end of the country to the other,—that would delight me inexpressibly! It must be a glorious work that could produce such an effect, on a public of so utterly phlegmatic a temper as ours. There is some character in hatred; and if we did but make a beginning, and show some depth and force of character, be it in what it would, we should be half way towards becoming a people. '*They do not like me,*' (*Sie mögen mich nicht*) the flat, lifeless, insipid word! Neither do I '*like*' them! (*Ich mag sie auch nicht!*)* I have never been able to content them! If, indeed, my Walpurgis sack should be opened after my death, and all the Stygian tormenting spirits, till then imprisoned, be let loose to plague others as they have plagued me;—or if people should chance to stumble on that passage in the continuation of Faust, in which the devil himself finds mercy and pardon with God;—that, I think, they would not forgive me in a hurry."

"For thirty years they have been sorely vexed and tormented in spirit by the broomstick on the Blocksberg, and the cat's dialogue in the witches' kitchen, which occurs in Faust, and all the interpreting and allegorizing of this dramatic-humouristic extravaganza have never thoroughly prospered. Really people should learn, while they are young, to make and to take a joke, and to throw away scraps as scraps.

* *Mögen* is the infinitive mood of the cognate of our imperfect verb *may*. *Ich mag*, I may. The Germans use it to express the least intense volition or inclination. For instance, at table, Will you take fish? *Ich dank, ich mag es nicht.*—*Transl.*

"Yet even the clever Madame de Stael was greatly scandalized that I kept the devil in such a good humour, in the presence of God the Father. She insisted upon it that he ought to be more grim and spiteful. What will she say if she sees him promoted a step higher—nay, perhaps, meets him in heaven?" (15)

"Pardon me," interrupted I, "you spoke just now of a Walpurgis sack. This is the first word I ever heard fall from your lips on the subject. May I know what that is?"

"The Walpurgis sack," answered Goethe, assuming the stern solemnity of an infernal judge, "is a sort of infernal pocket, case, bag, or whatever you like to call it, originally destined for the reception of certain poems which had a near connexion with the witch scenes in Faust, if not with Blocksberg itself. As often happens, its destination expanded itself; just as hell had at first but one apartment, but afterwards had limbo and purgatory added to it as wings. Every bit of paper that falls into my Walpurgis sack falls into hell; and out of hell, as you know, is no deliverance. Nay, if I were to take it into may head (and I am not ill inclined for it to-day) to seize myself by the forelock, and throw myself into the Walpurgis sack,—by my faith, what's in is in, and can never get out; even were it my own self. So rigorous, I would have you know, am I about my Walpurgis sack, and the infernal constitution I have granted to it. In it burns an unquenchable purifying fire, which, when it seizes its prey, spares neither friend nor foe. I, at least, would not advise any body to go very near it. I am afraid of it myself."

A specimen of the contents of this Walpurgis sack, and of Goethe's humour, may be seen in the following sketch of a scene which was suppressed in the printed copies of Faust.

As Faust is anxious to see and know the whole world, Mephistophiles proposes to him, among other things, that they should go and crave audience of the emperor. It is just the time of the coronation. Faust and Mephistophiles arrive safe and well at Frankfort. They are to be presented. Faust refuses to go, because he does not know what to say to the emperor, or how to entertain him. Mephistophiles, however, bids him be of good courage, promises to be at hand in time of need, to prompt him whenever the conversation halts, and, in case it is utterly at a stand, to take upon himself both his person and the conversation, so that the emperor can never know with whom he has, or has not, spoken.

Faust, after some hesitation, consents. They go together into the audience-chamber, and are actually presented. Faust, to prove himself worthy of this honour, calls forth all the talent and knowledge of which he is master, and discourses on the sublimest topics; but his fire warms himself alone—it leaves the emperor cold as ever. His majesty yawns repeatedly, and is just on the point of putting an end to the conversation. Mephistophiles perceives this at the exact moment, and comes to the aid of poor Faust, as he had promised. He instantly assumes his figure, and stands before the emperor, with mantle, and collar, and sword at his side, to all appearance Faust himself. He takes up the conversation exactly where Faust dropped it, only with very different, and far more brilliant success. He argues, dogmatizes, and twattles right and left, cross over and back again, into the world and out of the world, till the emperor is lost in astonishment, and assures the surrounding nobles of his court that this is a most profoundly learned man,

and that he could listen to him for days and weeks without ever being tired. That at first, indeed, he did not display his talents, but, when he was once fully launched on the stream of conversation, nothing could be imagined finer than the manner in which he propounded every thing: so briefly, yet with such elegance and depth. He must acknowledge, as emperor, that he never found such a treasure of thought, knowledge of the world, and profound experience, united in one person,—not even in the wisest of his counsellors.

Whether his imperial majesty crowned this eulogy with the proposition that Faust-Mephistophiles should enter his service, or accept the post of prime minister, is unknown to me. Probably, however, Faust, for good reasons, declined the offer—if it was made.

On Easter Monday, 1808, I spent the evening with Goethe in a small select party. That is what he likes. On this occasion he put no restraint on his fancy, but gave it free course; especially when we came to talk of the theatre and modern literature, which he compared with political events, and carried through his comparison with the most amusing and lively humour. "Piccolomini" had been acted on the Saturday; on the following Thursday, after a long interval, "Wallenstein," was to follow.

"It is," said Goethe, "with these pieces as with the choicest wines; the older they are, the higher does their flavour become. I make bold to call Schiller a poet, and a great one too,—though the latest rulers and dictators of our poetical world assure us he is

none. Wieland, too, they say is nothing. The only question then is, who *is* any thing?

"A little while ago a literary journal in one of the two towns of Ingoldstadt or Landshut, I don't precisely know which, formally proclaimed Friedrich Schlegel (16) first German poet, and Imperator* in the republic of letters. God preserve his majesty on his new throne, and send him a long and happy reign! For all this, one would not answer for it that he has not some very rebellious subjects in his kingdom, of whom we have some" (casting a side glance at me) "even in our own immediate neighbourhood.

"The German republic of letters is however now as busy a scene as the Roman empire in its decline, when every body wanted to govern, and nobody knew at last who was really emperor. Almost all our great men live in exile; and every impudent settler may become emperor whenever he can gain the good will of the soldiery, or acquire any other sort of influence.

"A few emperors more or less is a matter not to be thought of in such times. There were once thirty emperors ruling together in the Roman empire. Why should we have fewer chiefs in our learned state. Wieland and Schiller are already formally dethroned. How long my old imperial mantle will continue to hang on my shoulders, it is not easy to predict; I do not know myself. I am determined, however, if it should come to that, to show the world that my heart is not set upon crown and sceptre, and that I can bear my dethronement with patience; for truly no man can escape his fate (17.)

* I find myself constrained to use this word, as Goethe does, since there is no other that expresses his meaning. Emperor (*kaiser*) has acquired a totally different acceptation in modern Europe, and is inconsistent with our notions of a republic: General in Chief, or Commander, expresses but part of the functions of Imperator.—*Transl.*

"But what were we talking of just now? Oh, of emperors! Good. Novalis (18,) however, was none; though in time he might have become one, as well as other people. Pity that he died so young, and moreover that he conformed to the taste of his age, and turned Catholic. Already, as the newspapers assure us, young damsels and students make pilgrimage in troops to his grave, and strew flowers over it with lavish hands. That is what I call a promising beginning, and one which leaves good hope of future results.

"As I read but few newspapers, I always beg such of my friends as are at hand to give me notice whenever any important event of this kind—a canonization, or the like—takes place. I, for my part, am content that people should say all imaginable harm of me during my life-time; after my death, they will be the more likely to leave me in peace, as all the matter of defamation will have been exhausted before-hand, so that little or nothing will remain to be said.

"Tieck was emperor, too, for a time, but it did not last long; he was soon deposed. They said there was some thing too Titus-like in his temper; he was too mild and good-natured. In the present state of things, the empire requires a rigorous sway, and what may be called a sort of barbaric grandeur.

"Next came the reign of the Schlegels. Things now went on better. August Wilhelm Schlegel, the first, and Friedrich, the second, of the name, both ruled with becoming severity. Not a day passed in which some one was not sent into exile, or in which a few executions did not take place. Perfectly right! Such rulers have from time immemorial been immense favourites with the people.

"A little while ago, a young beginner some where represented Friedrich Schlegel as a German Hercules, who went about with his club, and smote whatever stood in his way, to the death. For this meritorious

deed, the aforesaid valourous emperor raised the young gentleman to the rank of a noble, and, without farther preliminary, declared him one of the heroes of German literature. His diploma is made out; you may rest assured of it; I have seen it with my own eyes. Grants, domains, whole articles in reviews and magazines, written by intimate friends, are given without stint. Enemies are to be secretly kept out of the way; their writings are to be discreetly laid aside, and not produced at all.

"As we have a very patient public in Germany, a public that never ventures to read a book till it has been reviewed, this affair is not badly contrived.

"The best thing in the whole business is the uncertainty; *e. g.* a man goes to bed at night well and happy as emperor;—in the morning he wakes, and finds, to his great astonishment, that the crown is gone from his head. I must confess this a sad mischance. However, the head, in as far as the emperor had any, sits still safely in its place; and that I regard as so much sheer gain. What an ugly thing it is, in comparison, to read of the old emperors who were throttled by dozens, and thrown into the Tiber! For my own part, though I may be dispossessed of throne and sceptre, I really look to die quietly in my bed, here, on the shores of the Ilm.

"To return to the concerns of our empire, and especially of emperors. Another young poet in Jena has died too soon (19.) Emperor, to be sure, he could not become; but the post of prime minister, lord high chamberlain, or some thing of the kind, he might have attained to. If not, a place always stood open to him as one of the great heroes of the press. To institute a chamber of peers, for which property should be made a qualification, would certainly be no despicable plan in German literature. If that young man had only lived a few years longer in Jena, he might have be-

come a peer of the realm before he knew where he was; but, as it turned out, he died, as I said, too soon. That was certainly premature. One ought to take care (as the rapid march of our modern literature demands) to cover one's self as quickly as possible with fame, and as slowly as possible with earth. That is the fundamental rule to establish. The business is by no means accomplished by the publication of a few sonnets, and two or three almanacks. The literary friends of this young man, indeed, assured us, in the public prints, that his sonnets would long survive him; I have not inquired into the matter since, and therefore cannot tell whether this prediction has been fulfilled, or how the whole affair stands.

"When I was young, I remember indeed to have heard sensible men say, that a single masterly poet or painter was often the growth of a century; but those times are long past. Our young men know how to manage matters better; and leap from one thing to another, according to the fashion of the time, so that it does one's heart good to see them.

"Their labour is not to be before their age, but to embody the whole age in themselves; and when that does not succeed to their heart's content, they are immeasurably dissatisfied, and abuse the vulgarity of the public, which, in its sweet innocence, is delighted with every thing.

"I had a visit lately from a young man who was just from Heidelberg; I think he could not be much above nineteen. He assured me, in perfect earnest, that his opinions were all made up; and that, as he knew what he was about, he was determined henceforward to read as little as possible, and to endeavour to develope his views of human life, unaided, by his own observations on society, without suffering himself to be diverted or hindered by the talk, the books, or the pamphlets of others. That's a glorious beginning!

When a man starts from zero, his progress must needs be striking!"

Thus playfully was Goethe wont to reprove the follies of the age. We shall hereafter see more of such humourous traits and pranks of his, but of a more practical kind.

CHAPTER VI.

The Duke of Saxe Weimar.—Consequences of the battle of Jena.—State of Weimar and of Germany.—Blücher.—Napoleon's threats against the Duke of Weimar.—Battle-scenes.—Pillage and conflagration of Weimar.—Heroic conduct of the Grand Duchess Louisa.—Espionage at the Grand Duke's table.—Charges brought against him.—His leaning to Prussian officers.—Herr von Ende.—Herr von Rühl.—Herr von Muffling.—The Duke's visit to the Duke of Brunswick.—Goethe's emotion on hearing these charges.

The noble Duke of Weimar had obeyed the call of honour, and, on the 14th of October, 1806, had followed the banner of Prussia. The battle of Jena, the loss of which decided the fate of the whole of the north of Germany, brought our little state also into the greatest jeopardy. While the result of this bloody tragedy slowly travelled across the mountains from Jena to us, its last act was destined to be performed on the evening of the same day, in the streets of Weimar itself. Tumult, conflagration, and a three days' pillage, soon appeared in the train of this fearful event. The French followed up their successes in the most brilliant manner. Magdeburg fell more rapidly than the emperor himself had anticipated. Blücher, indeed, fought with dauntless intrepidity in the market-place, and the streets of Lübeck; but this prophetic foreshow of the heroic courage of the Prussians (which

Napoleon, intoxicated with his success at Jena, either would not understand, or could not) had no power to produce any favourable change in the general aspect of affairs.

The Duke of Weimar, after his Residence* had already been invested by enemies, double in number his own troops, and his territory over-run on every side, set out at the head of the royal† cavalry entrusted to his command, which he led with equal firmness and success across the Elbe. The presence of so dauntless a chief saved this corps amidst the universal confusion; for despondency had now taken possession of the bravest and the best; and the craven, oft-repeated cry, that all was lost, drove even the Prussians, spite of their tried valour and recollected triumphs, into flight, even before the French appeared.

Let us not attempt to conceal this fact; for our honour is now the greater, that it was once so with us. If Blücher and the Duke of Weimar were not blinded by this mighty blaze of military triumphs; if they did not, like the rest, instantly renounce all attempts at farther resistance, it was urged against them, especially the latter (whose state and subjects were placed under French domination as soon as he was known to have joined the enemy's ranks,) as a rash and ill-timed defiance.

Even before the battle of Jena, the most violent threats against the duke were afloat. As soon as the French came to Weimar, it was said, they would not leave one stone upon another. The duke would lose his crown and sceptre as a punishment for having had the presumption to draw the sword against the mightiest of emperors, at whose feet destiny had laid a world.

* The capital of the small states of Germany is called not *Hauptstadt* (capital,) but *Residenz.—Transl.*

† *i. e.* Prussian.—*Transl.*

Under these circumstances, it certainly seemed that we had little of a cheering nature to expect; and, indeed, all who could flee fled. Only the wife of the reigning Duke, Louisa, born Princess of Hessen-Darmstadt (20,) stayed behind, alone in the palace. In the midst of her people, amid conflagration and pillage, this noble woman received the conqueror of the world with perfect calmness and self-possession; and the collected, serene majesty of a great and lofty female soul, which she opposed to him in this decisive moment, extorted, even from him, respect and deference.

Messengers from that fight, so big with consequences, came one after another into her presence, while it was yet undecided, and was contested with varying success on the high ground between Jena and Auerstädt, from morning till evening.

It was on the 14th of October of the year 1806, at half-past six in the morning, that the thunder of the artillery awakened the inhabitants of Weimar out of their sleep. The report came with the wind; all the windows in the houses clattered and shook, and universal consternation spread through the town. Young and old rushed into the streets, on the heights, up the towers, out at the gates; whenever the roll of the cannon, which grew nearer and nearer, permitted favourable conjectures to their hopes or suggested unfavourable ones to their fears.

The face of events changed rapidly. Disordered troops of horse soon galloped through the town, and, in their hurried course, assured us the victory was ours. Then appeared a party of French prisoners, whom the people, and the soldiers left to guard the town, in their fancied triumph, would have maltreated, had they not been restrained by a provident law. But a noble Prussian officer would not suffer it. He took a *thaler* out of his pocket, and gave it to a wounded and bleeding French chasseur, saying "*Buvez à la santé de votre empéreur.*"

The French prisoners were followed but too soon by Prussian cavalry mortally wounded, hanging athwart their horses. The multitude were still occupied with this saddening spectacle, when several artillery-men, begrimmed with the smoke of gun-powder, and stained with blood, with faces as if covered with black crape, rushed in a troop through the Kegelthor into the town, spreading alarm and horror where ever they went, by their terrific aspect: for the anxious expression visible on their marred and distorted features, as they looked around from time to time, and the dreadful marks—gashes of the sabre, and stabs of the lance—which they brought with them from the field, told but too plainly that death was close at their heels. He was indeed at hand.

The Webicht, the avenues leading to it, as well as the high road from Jena to Weimar, was filled with a thousand-voiced war-cry, in which the rush and shock of steeds and horsemen, the roll of the drum, and the call of the trumpet, the tramp and the neighing of horses, were at times to be distinguished. The firing at length totally ceased: then came that fearful pause, in which cavalry, charging on the enemy's rear, breaks through his ranks and commences a noiseless carnage.

The French now planted a few guns on the heights above Weimar, from which they could fire into the town. It was a calm, bright October day. In the streets of Weimar every thing appeared dead. The inhabitants had retreated into their houses. Now and then was heard the boom of one of the guns posted at Ober Weimar. The balls hissed through the air, and not unfrequently struck the houses. In the intervals, the birds were heard singing sweetly on the esplanade, and the other public walks; and the deep repose of nature formed an awful and heart-appalling contrast with this scene of horror.

But I must break off, and resume the pencil for the

completion of this gloomy picture, at another time and place.

The first who occupied the market-place of Weimar were a party of French chasseurs; they were followed by a large body of infantry. Order and discipline were utterly out of the question. The work of plunder was systematically begun. The crash of doors burst in, the shrieks of the inhabitants, were heard on every side. I shall only add, here, that at seven o'clock in the evening, when the houses opposite to the palace were in flames, the light was so intense that people could see to read hand writing, both in the palace court and in the market-place. None could believe other, than that the French would execute their threats, and lay the whole town in ashes.

When, therefore, at this terrific crisis the report was suddenly spread, that the Grand Duchess Louisa was still in the palace, the effect which it produced on the hearts of the citizens was such, that, where ever a few met together, their despair and anguish were changed into rapturous joy.

How beneficently this noble picture of princely and womanly courage and magnanimity wrought upon all hearts and minds, from the highest to the lowest, at this juncture;—what it prevented, and what it held together,—shall be dwelt upon in another place; for it is just, nay, (considering the transitoriness of all human things) it is most praiseworthy, to take care that She who lighted us, as our beacon, in this fearful storm, should be held up as a model of the lofty intrepidity and constancy of woman, and consecrated to the admiration of the remotest posterity.

Mean while these circumstances produced a far different effect on the minds of the French. The deeply-offended emperor permitted, indeed, the duke's return to his states, but not without the strongest marks of suspicion and distrust; so that the noble-minded, frank, sincere German was from this moment surrounded with

spies, even at his very board. As my business often took me to Berlin and Erfurt, at this time, I had frequent opportunities of hearing remarks from those high in authority, which made me absolutely certain that they were laid before the emperor as the results of the register of the secret police kept there; and I consequently thought it my duty to make this known to the duke.

I put them into writing as I heard them, with the most literal exactness, and transmitted them through a high channel.

On this occasion, Goethe displayed so noble and beautiful a personal attachment to the Grand Duke, that I should have it on my conscience if I failed to give to the German public this leaf of the biography of its greatest poet.

It frequently happened, when I visited Goethe, that the eventful circumstances of the time (in which I was myself actively implicated; not, as I thank God, for the calamity, but in the cause of my country) were discussed by us on every side with circumspection, though without alarm. On the occasion I allude to, I was visiting Goethe in his garden, after my return from Erfurt, and the conversation fell on the burdens and oppressions of the French government. I read to him the facts I had learned at Erfurt, point by point, exactly in the same state as they were afterwards laid before the duke.

It was alleged, among other things, that the Duke of Weimar had lent four thousand thalers to General Blücher, whose hostility to the French was notorious, and who, after his defeat at Lübeck, had retired with his officers to Hamburg, where they were in the greatest difficulties. It was likewise universally known that a Prussian officer, Captain von Ende (now governor of Köln) had been raised to the post of Grand Marshal to the Grand Duchess. Now it was not to be denied, that the placing of so many Prussian offi-

cers, who were notoriously disaffected, in the civil as well as the military service, was very unsatisfactory to France. The emperor, it was said, would hardly acquiesce in, or endure, the formation of a tacit conspiracy against him in the very centre of the Rhenish confederation. Even for the post of tutor to his son Prince Bernhard, the duke had selected a ci-devant Prussian officer, Herr von Rühl (afterwards general in the Prussian service.) Herr von Müffling, too, also an officer, and son of the Prussian general of the same name (now on the Prussian general staff) had been appointed president of one of the courts* of justice in Weimar, with a large salary. It was notorious that the duke was on terms of strict personal intimacy with him; such connexions could, of course, answer no other end than to nourish that concealed rancour against France, which was inveterate enough without. It appeared that every means were industriously sought to irritate and call forth anew the anger of the emperor, who had already had enough to forget on the part of Weimar. The conduct of the duke was, at all events, imprudent in the highest degree, even supposing him to be guiltless of evil designs. As an instance of this, he, accompanied by Herr von Müffling, had visited the duke of Brunswick, (21) the deadly foe of France, on his march to Brunswick, after the battle of Lübeck.

Goethe heard me, in silence, up to this point. His eyes now flashed with fire, and he exclaimed, "Enough! What would they have, then, these Frenchmen? Are they human! Why do they exact the utterly inhuman? What has the duke done, that is not worthy of all praise and honour? Since when, is it a crime for a man to remain true to his old friends and comrades in misfortune? Is then the memory of a high-minded man so utterly nothing in their eyes? Why do they

* Landes Collegium.

require from the duke to obliterate all the noblest recollections of his life—the seven years' war—the memory of Frederick the Great, his uncle—all that is great, and glorious, and venerable in the former condition of Germany, in which he took an active part, and for which he, at last, set crown and sceptre on the die? Do they expect that he is to wipe out all this, as with a wet sponge, from the tablets of his memory, like an ill-reckoned sum, because it pleases his new master?

"Does your empire of yesterday, then, already stand so immoveably steadfast that you are exempt from all, even the slightest, fear of participating in the changes of human things? Formed by nature to be a calm and impartial spectator of events, even I am exasperated when I see men required to perform the impossible. That the duke assists wounded Prussian officers robbed of their pay, that he lent the lion-hearted Blücher four thousand *thalers* after the battle of Lübeck,—that is what you call a conspiracy!—that seems to you a fit subject for reproach and accusation!

"Let us suppose the case, that to-day or to-morrow misfortune befell your grand army;—what would a general or field-marshal be worth in the emperor's eyes, who would act precisely as our duke has acted under these circumstances? I tell you the duke *shall* act as he acts! He *must* act so! He would do great injustice if ever he acted otherwise! Yes,—and even were he thus to lose country and subjects, crown and sceptre, like his ancestor the unfortunate John, yet must he not deviate one hand's breadth from this noble manner of thinking, and from that which the duty of a man and a prince prescribes in such an emergency.

"Misfortune! what is misfortune? This is a misfortune;—that a prince should be compelled to endure such things from foreigners. And if it came to the same pass with him as formerly with his ancestor Duke John; if his ruin were certain and irretrievable, let not

that dismay us: we will take our staff in our hands and accompany our master in adversity, as old Lucas Kranach did; (22) we will never forsake him. The women and children, when they meet us in the villages, will cast down their eyes, and weep, and say one to another, 'That is old Goethe and the former duke of Weimar, whom the French emperor drove from his throne because he was so true to his friends in misfortune; because he visited his uncle, the duke of Brunswick, on his death-bed; because he would not let his old comrades and brothers-in-arms starve!'"

At this, the tears rolled in streams down his cheeks. After a pause, having recovered himself a little, he continued, "I will sing for bread! I will turn strolling ballad-singer* and put our misfortunes into verse! I will wander into every village, and into every school, wherever the name of Goethe is known; I will sing† the dishonour of Germany, and the children shall learn the song of our shame till they are men; and thus shall they sing my master upon his throne again and your's off his!

"Yes, mock at all laws—through them at last shall you be brought to shame! Come on, Frenchman! Here, or nowhere, is the place to grapple with you! If you seek to root out this feeling from German hearts, or to tread it under foot, (which comes to the same thing) *you* will soon be under the feet of this very people.

* "*Bäukel Sänger*,"—*i. e.* a man who sings on benches at the doors of alehouses—the meanest and humblest of itinerant musicians. —*Transl.*

† I am much tempted to use here the true and perfectly English translation of the original *besignen;* since the difference between I will *sing* (it may be only once) and I will *besing*. is important. It is extremely to be regretted that we have let foolish and tyrannous custom confine this useful mode of forming a frequentative verb, or of modifying its sense in other ways not to be analyzed here, to some three or four words, instead of applying it systematically and analogically to all, as the Germans do.—*Transl.*

"You see, I tremble hand and foot! It is long since I was so moved.

"Give me this report! But no, take it yourself! Throw it in the fire! Burn it; and when you have burnt it, gather up the ashes and throw them into the water! Let them seethe, and stew, and boil. I will bring wood myself for the fire, till it is utterly stewed away;—till the smallest letter—every comma and every point,—goes off in smoke and steam, so that there remains not an atom of it upon German ground. And thus must we do with these insolent, over-bearing strangers, if ever things should go better with Germany."

I need not add a word to this truly manly burst of feeling, which did equal honour to Goethe and to the duke.

As I embraced Goethe, at taking leave, my eyes, too, were filled with tears.

CHAPTER VII.

Goethe's opinions on his literary cotemporaries.—Heinrich von Kleist: his gloomy views of life.—"Käthchen von Heilbronn."—"Michel Kohlhaas."—Kleist's irritability.—"Penthesilea."—Lessing.—Goethe's admiration for him.—His "Hamburgische Dramaturgie."—His plays.—"Minna von Barnhelm."—"Emilia Galeotti."—Winkelman.—Golden age of Weimar.—Wardrobe of German literati.—Lenz.—The "Bal paré."—The French language.—Private theatricals.—The Saxon Rittmeister.—Goethe as Manager.

The conversation once fell on Kleist (23) and his *Käthchen von Heilbronn*. Goethe found fault with that northern rigour of a hypochondriacal temperament which distinguished him. "To a matured understanding," said he, "it is impossible to enter with pleasure into the power of such motives as he employed in his poetry. Even in his *Kohlhaas*, beautifully told and cleverly combined as it is, there is a general disjointedness. It requires a potent spirit of contradiction to make an incident so isolated serve as an illustration of such an all-pervading deep-rooted gloom respecting the course of human affairs. There is an unlovely, a dissonant, principle in nature, with which poetry ought not to meddle; with which it cannot reconcile itself, let the handling of the matter be never so exquisite."

And then he returned to his favourite theme, of the cheerfulness, the grace, the bright, joyous colouring

given to life in the Italian novels, with which he occupied himself the more busily the more darkly the times loured around him.

At this, he called to mind that the gayest of these tales owed their existence to a peculiarly gloomy period, during the prevalence of the plague. "I have a right," continued he, after a pause, "to find fault with Kleist, for I loved him and extolled him; but whether it be that his education (as is now the case with many) was troubled and marred by the times, or whether any deeper cause lay at the bottom,—enough—he does not perform what he promised. This hypochondria is quite too strong—it destroys him as a man and as a poet. You know what trouble it cost me, what trials and rehearsals, to bring out his *Wasserkrug* on this stage. That it did not succeed, after all, lay in the circumstance that, though there was a great deal of talent and humour, it was deficient in rapidity of action and in finish. But to ascribe its failure to me, nay, even, as was the fact, to want to send me a challenge to Weimar, on that ground, 'indicates,' as Schiller said, 'some grievous obliquity of nature, the cause and the excuse for which is to be traced only to excessive irritability of nerves, or to disease.'

"I wish you would read *Käthchen von Heilbronn*," said he, turning to me, "as I know your inclination for Kleist, and repeat to me the main *motivo* of it. Then, and not before, I will discuss the point with myself whether I can read it too. The reading of his *Penthesilea* lately answered very ill to me. The tragedy really borders, in some places, on broad comedy; for instance, in the passage where the Amazon appears on the stage with only one breast, and assures the public that all her feelings had taken refuge in this; a *motivo* which, in the mouth of the Columbine of a Neapolitan popular theatre, and addressed to an impudent Polichinello, might certainly prove effective

enough; so far, at least, as the wit were not rendered disagreeable, even to such an audience, by the repulsiveness of the image."

Of Lessing's (24) merit, talent, and acuteness; of the distinctness with which, in his *Hamburgischen Dramaturgie*, he marked out the way to all higher attempts at dramatic poetry in Germany (though opposed by Frederick the Great, Voltaire, Gottsched, and all the admirers of the French drama;) of the new era he founded, by the introduction of Shakspeare (with which the succeeding rapid bursts of our literature was most intimately connected,) Goethe spoke with the profoundest sensibility and gratitude.

"As an acting play," he remarked, "perhaps the whole modern dramatic art can show nothing so incomparable as the first two acts of *Minna von Barnheim*, in which sharply defined character and primitive German manners are intimately united with a rapid march of incidents. In the latter part the play falls off, and indeed the plan of it does not deserve that it should maintain such a pre-eminence; but this can neither detract from the praise it merits, nor induce any fair man to qualify it.

"In the *Emilia Galeotti*, it is a masterly and highly characteristic conception that the Chamberlain should lead Emilia into the Prince's way; but that the Prince, by going into the church, and intermeddling in the transaction, should spoil both Marinelli's game and his own. Nevertheless the manner in which Lessing works out the incidents of the plot is not always equally fine. A note which the Prince wrote to his former mistress, the Countess Orsina, and in which he declines her visit for the morrow, being accidentally left lying about (if indeed, as the Countess herself remarks, it be not blasphemy to talk of accident in such things,) becomes the cause that her dreaded rival arrives at the very moment in which Count Appiani is shot, his betrothed bride carried off by Marinelli to the Prince's country

house, and thus delivered over into the hands of the murderer of her lover.

These are traces of a master hand, which sufficiently prove what profound insight into the nature of dramatic art was granted to Lessing. Be assured, too, that we are perfectly conscious what we owe to him, and to those like him, particularly to Winkelman."

The reign of the young duke of Weimar was a glorious time for Weimar, and for the whole of Germany. Men of genius thronged from east to west to this modern seat of the muses; thinking that they too, like Goethe, Herder, and Wieland, should find an asylum. Bertuch, (25) the father, who was treasurer to the duke, used in after times to speak with great glee of a singular head in the accounts which he had to submit in those days. It consisted almost entirely of breeches, waistcoats, shoes, and stockings for German literati, who came wandering within Weimar's gates slenderly provided with those articles. The duke's youthful gaiety and Goethe's drollery contrived to create many a diverting scene out of these materials.

About this period it was that Lenz, (26) an early and original friend of Goethe's, came to Weimar. It happened that the duke and Goethe were absent. He alighted at the "Erbprinz" inn, where he soon learned that there was to be a *bal paré* the same evening at court.

Bal paré and *bal masqué* were to poor Lenz's ears one and the same thing; for his whole soul was German, and he hated the French language as the deadly and besetting sin of the higher classes in Germany. I will be at this, whatever it is, thought he, I shall want nothing but a black domino and a mask. He accordingly sent the waiter for these articles. The man

stared at him with some astonishment, but obeyed the strange gentleman's order. At the appointed hour, Lenz actually went to court in this dress. The amazement of the company may be conceived, when suddenly a black domino and mask made its appearance amid the gay and brilliant dresses of the dancers. Lenz, however, did not, in the least degree, perceive what an extraordinary part he was playing. On the contrary he walked about with the utmost confidence and composure among the spectators, and asked one of the most distinguished young ladies in the room to dance. The lady, however, as might be expected, begged first to know the "name and character," as porters call it, of the person who addressed her; and on his replying, "I am Lenz," she, hearing a name so little indicative of equality of rank, refused with equal brevity; or, in technical language, "she regretted," &c. &c.

Fortunately, just as the *embarras* had reached its height, Goethe appeared. He immediately recognised, spite of the domino, his long-expected, old, and eccentric friend. He sent for Lenz to the gallery adjoining the ball-room, and after the first joyful welcome, he exclaimed, "But tell me, what the devil put it in your head to make your appearance at court wholly uninvited, and in such a garb too?"

"Invited or uninvited," said Lenz, who had not quite got over the mortification of his rejection, "what does that signify? it is a *bal masqué*—there, I think, every body is free to enter."

"What do you mean, *bal masqué?*" replied Goethe; "it is a *bal paré*, you child, who can't distinguish one thing from another!"

"Well, *bal paré* or *bal masqué*, as you please," growled Lenz; "what do I care for your pack of hair-breadth distinctions, and all your cursed French chatter? For my part I am in as great a fever every

time I hear a word of Welsch as a Turkey cock* (*welscher Hahn*) at the sight of scarlet. If your ears are washed with purer holy water than mine, thank God for it; but once for all, I beg you not to plague me with any of your court jargon, unless you wish me to strap up my bundle again and be off. If, indeed, they had but any thing of a language that they could speak out like men,—short, clear, and intelligible like ours; but they snuffle through their noses like a bagpipe, and no honest German can be a bit the wiser for all the quantity of stuff they send forth."

Goethe and Wieland (whom Lenz looked upon as half a Frechman, on account of his great partiality to French literature) endeavoured by every means in their power to pacify their exasperated friend. They quitted the court shortly after, but not without carrying away matter for a joyous and intellectual evening's entertainment.

About this same time an amateur theatre was opened at Weimar, in which Goethe, Corona Schroeter, Bertuch, von Einsiedel, and others, took the most lively and active interest. On one occasion the Jealous Husband (*Der eifersuchtige Ehemann*) was played; the part of the lover was allotted to Herr von Einsiedel. Unfortunately, however, just before the time of performance, he was attacked by a sudden indisposition. The parts could not be recast at so short a

* *Welsch* most commonly signifies Italian; but, in strictness, it includes French and all the cognate languages. The words Gael, Gaul, Gallic, Wales, Wallis, &c., are all of the same family, varying in form, according as they were applied by their Roman, or by their Teutonic conquerors, to different tribes of Kelts. The germanic English, of course, denoted by it the Gauls or Welsh, with whom they were more immediately in contact,—the Britons; the Germans of the mainland, French, Italians, Spaniards, &c.—*Transl.*

notice, and, to the great disappointment of all the party, the whole thing was at a stand.

At this juncture, a bold Saxon Rittmeister (*Chef d'Escadron*,) more dashing and good-natured than skilled in such matters, offered to undertake the part. On the third day he went to Herr von Einsiedel, and asked him to hear him recite it. It promised to go off tolerably, especially as they could reckon on a good prompter; but when it came to the performance, the result was very different, and the enterprising Rittmeister was in the greatest perplexity. He looked as red and hot as if he were charging at the head of his squadron of hussars, and were just going to hew down an enemy; however, he recovered himself a little, and went on with his part till the scene in which he is surprised with his mistress by the jealous husband, and stabbed with a dagger. Here he suddenly forgot the catch-word, stammered and blundered, over and over, while Bertuch, who played the jealous husband, and had been waiting a long time behind the scenes, dagger in hand, could not come on. The Rittmeister now began the part again, when suddenly Bertuch, by the advice of Goethe, who superintended the whole, rushed on the stage, and tried to put an end, *ex abrupto*, to the life of his unhappy rival by a vigorous thrust; but the Rittmeister absolutely would not fall. In vain did Bertuch repeatedly shout into his ear, "Devil take you, fall then!" He did not move from the spot, but remained standing as stiff as a post, perfectly erect, by the side of his beloved, reiterating his assurances to the by-standers, who were conjuring him to fall, that he had not yet got to the word. In this state of things, equally distressing to the manager and to the other performers, the former took a heroic resolution, and called out with a thundering voice from behind the scenes, "If he will not fall in front, stab him in the rear; we must get rid of him in one way or other; he'll ruin the whole play." At this decisive appeal,

Bertuch, who was then a very energetic person, though now become somewhat feeble and indecisive, manned himself. "Die," cried he, with a terrific voice, and at the same instant aimed such an emphatic blow at his antagonist, that he was completely thrown off his guard by this manœuvre in flank, and fell to the ground. At the same instant, four sturdy scene-shifters were sent on the stage by Goethe, with positive orders to drag the dead man off, whether he would or not. This was faithfully executed, and, to the extreme joy of the spectators, the performance went on without interruption.

CHAPTER VIII.

Amusements of the court of Weimar.—Gipsy parties.—Etteresburg.—Forest-theatres.—Their decorations.—The hermitage at the Kickelhahn.—Goethe's inscription.—The sacred tree.—Goethe and Klinger.—Klinger's coolness.—Von Einsiedel.—His horror of beer.—Gleim.—His first interview with Goethe.—Goethe's striking appearance.—His extempore readings.—His wild imagination and humour.—Goethe or the devil.

Often did Bertuch, in his quality of *maitre de plaisir*, receive orders, even at a late hour in the evening, to have the sumpter wagon, or travelling kitchen, ready, for that the court would start at early dawn for the forest. If it was a short expedition, two or three sumpter asses were sufficient. If it was more distant, over hill and dale, far into the tranquil country and under God's blue heaven, then indeed the night was a busy one, and all the pots and pans were in requisition. In the ducal kitchens there was such a boiling and stewing and roasting; such a slaughter of capons, pigeons, and fowls of all sorts:—wherever your eye glanced you saw bustle and activity. Late as it was, the ponds of the Ilm must yield their fish, the forest its partridges, the cellars their choicest and most generous wines.

A party of ladies and gentlemen, often mixed in merry groups, then took their way early in the morning. The trees which peopled the deep solitude, and

were wont to see only the soaring hawk which hung poised above their tops, or the wild-eyed deer, which even at the door of the charcoal-burner's hut found a leafy sanctuary, wondered at the joyous laugh and gay song of the festive throng. It seemed that now for the first time they had attained to all their rights and dignities, when they threw their friendly shade over youth and beauty, gladness and poetry, and mingled the rustling of their verdant roofs with the murmur of a common delight.

In these expeditions, dramatic amusements, of a greater or lesser kind, frequently formed a part of the day's diversion. Trees, groves, meadows and brooks served to form the stage. At Ettersburg, that delightful wooded hill, peopled with numerous herds of deer, the traces and boundaries of such forest-theatres are still visible. What merry scenes took place in a company so gay; so rich in all the bright, enterprising spirit and joyous vivacity of youth; what a contrast was presented by the calm, regular action of nature with the wild feats of these extempore plays, and how prettily the arrangements for them formed, as it were, a framework around them,—a play within and without the play,—every reader but moderately gifted with imagination may picture to himself.

On the Ilm too, just at that point where the river makes a beautiful bend around the shore, a regular theatre was constructed by these lovers of nature and of art. Trees and all natural objects, gipsies, fishermen, nixies, water spirits, sun, moon, and stars, all were dexterously introduced and gracefully employed in the course of the action. One of these occasions gave birth to the gipsy song,

"Im Nebelgriesel, im tiefsten Schnee," &c. (27)

This was also about the time at which Goethe wrote the last act of his *Iphigenie*, in a little hermitage on the romantic secluded Kickelhahn near Ilmenau, the windows of which commanded the most extensive view over the Thuringian forest.

This half-decayed hut, built of trunks of trees and covered with moss, is still standing, and on its walls is the following inscription in Goethe's hand writing:

"Unter allen Gipfeln ist Ruh';
In allen Wäldern hörest du
Keinen Laut!
Die Vögelein schlafen im Walde,
Warte nur! balde, balde,
Schläfst auch du!" (28)

On the trees at Ettersburg various inscriptions, half or wholly overgrown and effaced, are still to be seen, which not unfrequently have an obvious reference to those happy days of Aranjuez which a youth overflowing with the joyousness of early life, and with poetical enthusiasm, passed here. At the hermitage, where a visit from a wandering stag is not uncommon, and where the forester watches the game by the light of the autumnal moon, a majestic tree is yet standing, on which, inscribed as in a living album, the names of Herder, Gleim, Lavater, Wieland, and Goethe, are still distinctly legible.

Klinger, (29) as is well known, was Goethe's countryman. A friend of mine, with whom I was once talking about him, his writings, his residence in Weimar, and his departure for Petersburg, where he was made General, told me that one morning Klinger went to Goethe, took a large packet of manuscript out of his pocket, and began to read aloud. Goethe bore it for a time, but at length he sprang from his seat exclaiming, "What cursed stuff is this you have been writing again? The devil may bear it if he can!" and ran away. This, however, did not in the least

degree disconcert Klinger, nor disturb his equanimity; he rose quietly, put his manuscript in his pocket, and merely said, "Curious! this is the second man with whom this has happened to me to-day!" Wieland declared that if it had been his case he should have found it difficult to preserve such composure. Goethe replied, "So should I. But the very thing that proves Klinger to have been born to be a General is that he has such confounded coolness and assurance. I have often predicted it, in former times."

Von Einsiedel is honourably known to the learned world, not only by his translation of the "Brothers" of Terence, but also several pretty tales in Wieland's *Dsihinistan* claim him as their author. He had many most strange peculiarities. One was, that he had a perfect horror of beer. Somebody once remarked, that "nothing was so disgusting to him as to go into a house early in a morning, and finding the bottles and glasses which had been used the preceding night standing about on the table." "By your leave (*Halten's zu Gnaden,*") interrupted Einsiedel hastily, "if such a thing ever happened to me, I would never set foot in such a cursed house again as long as I lived."

Another time a brother beer-hater was protesting that not only he never tasted a drop of beer, but never would articulate the word beer. "By your leave," exclaimed Einsiedel with great vehemence, "and I never in all my life wrote it."

He wrote a very illegible hand, and was equally remarkable for talent and for absence of mind. He once entered a friend's room, bringing an enormous packet of manuscript, and said with great earnestness, "There's a romance which I wrote six years ago;

there are glorious things in it, but the devil may read it if he can. See what you can make of it!"

Herr von Einsiedel united the most amiable and agreeable character with an engaging exterior and manners; qualities which were surpassed by the integrity and kindness of his heart. He was chamberlain at the court of the Dowager Duchess Amelia, and one of the first and oldest friends of Wieland, who had a singular value and esteem for him.

"Shortly after Goethe had written his Werther," said the venerable Gleim (30) to me one day, "I came to Wiemar, and wished to know him. I had brought with me the last Göttingen *Musen-Almanack* as a literary novelty, and read here and there a piece to the company in which I was passing the evening. While I was reading, a young man, booted and spurred, in a short green shooting jacket thrown open, had come in and mingled with my audience. I had scarcely remarked his entrance. He sat down opposite to me, and listened very attentively. I scarcely knew what there was about him that struck me particularly, except a pair of brilliant black Italian eyes. But it was decreed that I should know more of him.

"During a short pause, in which some gentlemen and ladies were discussing the merits of the pieces I had read, lauding some and censuring others, the gallant young sportsman (for such I took him to be) arose from his chair, and bowing with a most courteous and ingratiating air to me, offered to relieve me from time to time in reading aloud, lest I should be tired. I could do no less than accept so polite an offer, and immediately handed him the book. But oh! Apollo and all ye Muses,—not forgetting the Graces,—what was

I then to hear! At first, indeed, things went on smoothly enough.

'Die Zephyr'n lauschten
Die Bäche rauschten
Die Sonne
Verbreitet ihre Licht mit Wonne.' (31)

The somewhat more solid substantial fare of Voss, Leopold Stolberg, Bürger, too, were delivered in such a manner that no one had any reason to complain.

"All at once, however, it was as if some wild and wanton devil had taken possession of the young reader, and I thought I saw the Wild Huntsman bodily before me. He read poems that had no existence in the Almanack; he broke out into all possible modes and dialects. Hexameters, iambics, doggrel verses, one after another, or blended in strange confusion, came tumbling out in torrents.

"What wild and humourous fantasies did he not combine that evening! Amidst them, came such noble magnificent thoughts, thrown in, detached and flitting, that the authors to whom he ascribed them must have thanked God on their knees if they had fallen upon their desks.

"As soon as the joke was discovered, a universal merriment spread through the room. He put every body present out of countenance in one way or other. Even my Mæcenasship, which I had always regarded it as a sort of duty to exercise towards young authors, poets, and artists, had its turn. Though he praised it highly on the one side, he did not forget to insinuate, on the other, that I claimed a sort of property in the individuals to whom I had afforded support and countenance. In a little fable composed extempore in doggrel verses, he likened me, wittily enough, to a worthy and most enduring turkey-hen, that sits on a great heap of eggs of her own and other people's, and hatches them with infinite patience; but to whom it

sometimes happens to have a chalk egg put under her instead of a real one; a trick at which she takes no offence.

"That is either Goethe or the devil," cried I to Wieland, who sat opposite to me at the table. "Both," replied he; "he has the devil in him again to-day; and then he is like a wanton colt that flings out before and behind, and you do well not to go too near him."

Gleim used to dwell with uncommon glee on this *escapade* of Goethe's, as did Wieland, from whose mouth I heard and collected the chief features of the story, as I have just related it.

CHAPTER IX.

Herder's opinion of mere artists.—Earnestness demanded of man.—Goethe and Herder.—Their incompatible characters.—Merk.—His opinion of Goethe.—His tragical end.—Herder's earnestness, philanthropy, and love of general principles.

As I was once talking in the tone I have used above, of the lofty indifference with which Goethe soared and hung poised above the world's game; he to whom I addressed myself, with his high-arched brow, from beneath which, as from a temple of the divinity, gleamed the radiant fire of his eyes, broke in upon me thus:

"All that is very well. But whether man here below *ought* to ascend into that region where fictitious and real life become one to his perception; where he loses the character of man, though not that of artist; where the light shines, but does not warm nor quicken; and whether the adoption of these maxims would not lead to a general want of character—this is another question.

"We must not contest with the gods their seats of eternal tranquillity. They may regard all that passes on this earth as a game fore-ordered by them. But man, subject to all human necessities and frailties, ought not to be amused by any painted drop-scene; he ought to retain that holy earnestness without which art degenerates at last into mere juggling and buf-

foonery. Play—for ever play. Sophocles did not play; Æschylus still less. These are all inventions of modern times, which are little or nothing worth. David sang hymns of bolder flight than even Pindar, and governed a kingdom to boot. What do you govern? It is good and praiseworthy that you should examine (or, as you are pleased to call it, make yourselves masters of) all, from the hysop that groweth on the wall, to the cedar of Lebanon—every phenomenon and variety of nature; only you ought not, mean while, to lose sight of Man,—the crown of all phenomena, in his moral, inborn greatness.

"When I think of Nero, how he set Rome on fire, and touched the lyre while he gazed on the conflagration—aye, he too *played!* It is a splendid picture! What does it signify to Nero's architect that women and children shed tears of desolation over their burning city? That is an old story. He, for his part, draws the plan for the rebuilding of Rome, and if his drawing looks well on paper, and does not get rubbed out, that is all he cares about. All will be executed 'in an improved taste,' and people ought to be grateful to the world's master for bringing about such a reform. Here then we have a pictured, and a real Rome. The difference is not so great. We are artists, gods, Neros; and be we how we may, or what we may, it is always the right:

'Denn Recht hat jeder eigene Charakter
Es gibt kein Unrecht als den Widerspruch.'" (32)

The mighty voice that uttered these words has long been silent. From the tone of thought they express, opposed to that of Goethe as north to south, the reader will easily guess that it was Herder's.

Merk, (33) another early friend of the poet, found it equally impossible to accommodate himself to this un-

qualified direction of his whole being and character towards observation.

Once, as Herder told me, he said to Goethe in his forcible piquant manner, "Look you, in comparison with what you might be in the world, and are not, all that you have written is, in my eyes, mere dirt."

Merk passed half a year in Weimar and was at length so out of humour that he ceased to see Goethe at all. "What the devil," said he, "possesses Wolfgang to play laquais and the lickspit about the court of Weimar,—to humbug others, or to be humbugged himself? Can he find nothing better to do?" "Merk," added Herder, "was an oddity; rigid on many points, often paradoxical, sometimes gloomy, sometimes giving out glorious flashes of light; it was his own fiery spirit that consumed him; he collapsed gradually into himself; the flame sent up a few fitful gleams, and then all was darkness and ashes. Merk ended a self-murderer."

Goethe, on his side, not unfrequently felt himself wounded to the very quick at being thus misunderstood by his friends, among whom too was Jacobi. (34) He acted as, according to his nature, he could not help acting, and meant no offence. He expected if no praise, at least no unkind reproaches. But his friends insisted on having him something different from what he was. The Chosen of nature must pourtray nothing but the Choisest. They wanted to confine him within a circle, lofty and exquisite indeed, but very narrow; that, namely, in which he had first won their favour. But Goethe's genius was all-embracing, and disdained every path which led him away, or separated him, from nature.

As the difference between him and Herder was a serious one, even the extraordinary qualities which distinguished both, rendered a reconciliation impossible. With Herder all forms became ideas; nay, he soon

reduced even all historic facts into "Ideas, towards a history of the human race."* On the contrary, in Goethe, all ideas became transmuted into forms. He would have liked, as we have seen above, to renounce the imperfect medium of language; to speak, like nature, in symbols, and to throw his whole imagination, with the vividness and reality of sense, into the existence of a flower or a star.

To him, as to Nature, it sufficed to revel in unwitnessed solitude, and to pass from one agreeable state of existence to another, through all forms and modes of life.

At such moments he disliked even the mention of Herder, whose northern severity led him to insist on overshadowing those gay, delightful visions of art and imagination, with the thunder-clouds and mists of politics and of actual life.

These, as Goethe truly remarked, were two totally different and widely-severed spheres; it was absolutely necessary to keep them quite distinct, and to let every man take care of himself, and God of us all. Thus what seemed to Goethe narrow and partial, Herder called noble and philanthropic; while, on the contrary, what Herder admired as the infinitude of a great Idea, revealing itself to man in various godlike emanations; —in the valour of the hero, the wisdom of the legislator, the inspiration of the poet, or the events of a world,—this sort of elevation moved Goethe so little, that such characters as Luther and Coriolanus excited in him a sort of uncomfortable feeling, which could be satisfactorily explained only on the hypothesis that their natures stood in a mysterious sort of opposition with his.

Goethe's genius and disposition were for the Beautiful, Herder's for the Sublime. Herder was powerfully

* "*Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit;*" the title of his great work.—*Transl.*

affected by the spirit of his age; it formed part of himself; he laboured to advance it; he proclaimed and adorned it in his writings. From the remotest corners of the earth, from the most distant ages, like one collecting lost jewels, he brought together, with glad industry, all the Great and Beautiful, in order to deck with it his beloved Man—"the image of God obscured,"—and to restore to him the lost glory of Eden.

Whatever Herder undertook, aimed at giving some loftier course to human action. Who is not filled with veneration and love at the contemplation of such endeavours?

He execrated books—"but what books did he write!"* exclaimed Wieland (who was infinitely attached to Herder,) in his delightful, sportive manner, on one occasion, when Herder's aversion to them was mentioned in his presence. The amiable poet did not comprehend the profound bitterness of soul which lay at the bottom of this declaration, nor reverence its source as it deserved. Precisely because this practical tendency was foreign to Goethe's whole character and being, and must of necessity be foreign to it, from the very endowments by which he was distinguished, he and Herder never could understand each other when subjects of this kind were discussed. On this single point, each was for ever a stranger to the other. (35)

* "*Aber schrieb welche!*" I cannot find means, either in English or French, to give an idea of the brevity and grace of this. *Welche* is here equal to the Italian *quali—Ma quali scrisse!*—*Transl.*

CHAPTER X.

Wieland lying in state.—His burial-day.—Goethe's "Natürliche Tochter."—Herder's opinion of it.—Goethe's opinion of Wieland.—Wieland's "Pervonte."—Character of Wieland's mind.—Effect of the sight of the countenances of departed friends.—Schiller's death.—Reverence of the German people for their poets.

WIELAND'S body lay in state to-day (Sunday, 24th of January, 1813) in Bertuch's house.

I had a long struggle with myself whether I should see him once more in death, or not. I passed the evening in a small circle, met to hear the *Natürliche Tochter* read aloud; but my heart was not there. I went home earlier than usual; it might be nine o'clock. I would not go whither my heart drew me: however, in the esplanade, I was seized with a longing which was resistless. The streets were thronged, and as it were involuntarily, I followed the stream of people in the direction which it had taken towards Bertuch's house. How I went through the doors I know not; I only remember there were sentinels before them. The beautiful floor of the room was covered with countless tapers. *Oberon*, *Musarion*, as I was afterwards told, were laid, together with the order of the Legion of Honour, on a velvet cushion. I saw nothing of all this. I saw only the coffin, and in it a countenance, noble indeed, but perfectly strange to me—a laurel crown had been placed upon its brow.

One other thing I remember—some one out of the crowd, I think Bertuch the younger, who was destined so soon to follow those heroes of our literature, Wieland and Herder, came up to me, and said in a melancholy tone, "We have sustained a great loss;" and that as I heard these words, and beheld at the same time the old, familiar face, formerly so cheerful and benign, now so solemn and sunken—so wholly changed—lighted by the gleam of the funereal tapers, an unutterable grief seized me; I could articulate no word, but was constrained to creep into a corner, and hide myself from the multitude to weep in silence.

These sorrowful thoughts followed me home, and occupied me a great part of the night. As at Herder's death, when the bells, which gave him their solemn accompaniment to the place of his long repose, first struck upon my ear, I found consolation only so long as the grief for so dear a loss could vent itself in tears.

Monday, the 25th of January, the day of the Conversion of St. Paul, was Wieland's burial-day. The body was sent to Osmannstadt, to be buried in his garden, by the side of his wife and Sophia Brentano.

I was too deeply affected to be able to join in the procession. Besides, I had promised to go in the afternoon to Goethe, for whose health we had more than ever to fear, in consequence of this event. He was indeed intensely affected by Wieland's death, as I have remarked above.

I accidentally fell upon the mention of the *Natürliche Tochter*, which, as I have just said, I had heard the day before, and asked him if we might look for a continuation of it. Goethe was silent awhile, and then answered, "I know not, in truth, whence the external circumstances necessary for the completion of it are to come. I for my part, have much reason to regret having been induced by Schiller's persuasions to de-

part from my old principles. In so far as I have allowed a mere *exposé* of this poem to be printed (for I cannot claim any other name for what is now before the public) I have robbed myself by anticipation of all pleasure in my work. The absurd criticisms and opinions which I may have to hear, on this plan of proceeding, will be added to my annoyances. In short, I am so out of love with this work myself, that I am half resolved to destroy the sketch of the whole which is among my papers, that no unauthorized hand may get hold of it after my death, and attempt an ill-judged continuation of it."

I remarked, by way of soothing Goethe's discontent, what Herder had said to me of this tragedy, and concluded with his very words. He called it "the most precious, ripe, and perfect fruit of a profound, reflecting spirit, which had silently brooded over the monstrous events of our times, and had illustrated them for high intents, which the many were indeed, at present, scarcely capable of comprehending."

"If that is the case," interrupted Goethe, "let me repeat what I was just saying; where are we to find the fitting cotemporaneous circumstances for the continuation of such a poem? What is concealed in that mysterious closet? What had I in view in bringing back the prince's daughter to a private station? On these points we will go into no farther explanation; let the Torso itself, and time—if the gloomy spirit of party, which spreads and moves in a thousand different directions, allows any calm for contemplation—answer for us."

"It was exactly from these points," said I, "that Herder expected a well thought-out continuation and development of these certainly rather epic than dramatic materials. The scene where Eugenia plays so innocently with her jewels, while a portentous destiny which hurries her to another portion of the globe, is hovering over her, Herder prettily compared to a poem

in the Greek Anthology, in which a child has fallen quietly asleep beneath a mass of rock, which is nodding to its fall." "On the whole, however," added he, "Goethe's silver-pointed pencil is too fine for the present public. The strokes it makes are too delicate, too little striking, too etherial, I might almost say. The eye accustomed to the coarse, gaudy scene-painting of our day, can by no means contract its gaze sufficiently for the perception of any accurate delineation of character. The present literary world, indifferent to correct drawing or truth of character, likes its artists to use a well-charged painting brush."

"The old man saw that well and truly," said Goethe.

"Herder," resumed I, "wished nothing more earnestly than the completion of a work which, for its simplicity and delicacy, and the pearly smoothness of its diction (to use his words,) he would not have exchanged for any of those productions which, floating in a blaze of colour, too often conceal the indistinctness of their outline by the splendour and glare of their tints."

At this Goethe said he would it were so, and that Herder's wish were fulfilled; "but now," added he, a minute after, "it is too late for both of us. I shall as little finish this poem, as Herder will read it."

Unconsciously our conversation fell again upon Wieland, "to whom," as Goethe remarked, "alone it was granted to give his writings to the public piecemeal, as he did in the *Deutsche Mercur*, without having his pleasure in his work destroyed by the absurd criticisms of the multitude with whom he thus brought himself into contact. He altered them, too, to please the public, which, where the work is out of one font, I can by no means approve."

"To dissipate gloomy thoughts, which the times excited, we lately took up *Pervonte* again. The plasticity, the gay luxuriant spirit of this poem are *unique*, inimitable—nay, quite inappreciable. In this, and si-

milar productions, it is the display of his own native character which causes our greatest pleasure.

"This matchless humour, when the fit came over him, was so rich, so prodigal, so extravagant, that it hurried its lord and master whithersoever it willed. He might preach, as he would, a thousand things about morals, manners, and social decorums and proprieties; and lay down endless inviolable rules and laws for himself, and others who resembled him;—they were all in vain, when he came into the fire, or rather, when the fire came over him: and then he was really himself—he was that which he ought to have been ever;—then it was that the beauty, the grace, the inimitable charm of his nature appeared.

"I remember hearing him read one of the first stories in the 'Arabian Nights,' which he had put into verse—that in which 'Fish, fish, do your duty,' occurs. In this first sketch all was so odd, so deliciously wild, absurd, and fantastic, that I could not have borne the alteration of a line. Now how could Wieland find in his heart to offer such a sacrifice to that criticism with which he all his life tormented himself and others? In the corrected and complete edition the wild was compelled to become tame, the absurd, reasonable, the extravagant, sober.

"I wish I could persuade you frequently to read such poems as the *Pervonte* aloud in company. Some preparation is necessary. Wieland's verses should be read with a sort of rich vivacity, if one would ensure to them an instantaneous effect. The natural genius that breathes through them is matchless—all flow, all spirit, all taste! A smiling plain, without the smallest inequality or obstacle, through which the veins of a truly comic wit are seen winding their way in every direction; and, if the caprice by which he is hurried away so wills it, not sparing even their author.

"None—not even the faintest trace of that laboured, excogitated technicality, which makes a man's best

ideas and feelings repulsive, by the artificial manner in which they are enounced, or destroys them for ever.

"This exquisite naturalness is the reason that whenever I have a mind thoroughly to enjoy Shakspeare, I read him in Wieland's translation. (37)

"Wieland handled rhyme like a master. I do believe if one had shot down a cart-load of words on his desk, he would have found means to arrange them into a beautiful poem.

"As to the new school, and the motives which have led them to set themselves in hostility to Wieland, and to try to throw his well-won, time-sanctioned fame into the shade, I had rather say nothing. Their intentions were not, indeed, so bad originally; they wanted to bring a factitious enthusiasm into vogue, and Wieland's ridicule of all enthusiastics must certainly have been a very awkward impediment in their way. But let ten or twenty years pass over, and all these spots in Wieland, which have been so industriously hunted out and brought to light, will be little thought of; while the humourous, tasteful poet will maintain possession of that sunny place in the literature of his age, to which he possesses the strongest claim by nature. (38)

"Being of an originally enthusiastic temperament (as is clearly seen in his *Sympathie eines Christen*, as well as in some other of his early productions,) he lived in continual fear of a relapse, and had therefore prescribed to himself accurate, judicious criticism, as a preservative. Even the frequent recurrence to the same objects of satire proves this fact. The higher aspirations of his soul will not be silenced; and it often happens that where he tries to ridicule Platonism, or any other so called mystical dreaming, he exhibits it in all its beauty, and with the glow of a delightful inspiration.

"He subjected all to reason, and especially to one

of her favourite offspring, criticism. On this road you come at no results. This is clearly to be seen in Wieland's last work, his translation of Cicero's letters. They contain the clearest and most felicitous expositions of the then state of the world, divided between the followers of Cæsar, and those of Brutus. They have all the freshness of a newspaper from Rome; but they leave you in complete uncertainty as to the main spring upon which every thing, in fact, depends. The reason of this is, that Wieland, in all he did, cared less for a firm footing, than for a clever debate. Sometimes he corrects the text by means of a note; but he would not be at all annoyed if another man stepped in, and again corrected his note by another note.

"But we must not be angry with Wieland for this; just this indecision it is which reconciles one to his jests; for earnestness ever embraces one side, and holds fast to that, to the exclusion of all lighter or more sportive views of the subject that may incidentally suggest themselves. The best and most delightful of his works arose out of this quality of his mind; and without it, his fantastic humour would be hardly intelligible. The same peculiarity which sometimes makes him obscure in prose, renders him most agreeable in poetry. Characters like Musarion received the whole of their singular charm from this cause."

When Goethe heard that I had looked upon Wieland yesterday in death, and had thus procured myself a miserable evening, and a worse night, he reproved me vehemently.

"Why," said he, "should I suffer the delightful impression of the features of my friend to be disturbed by the sight of a disfigured mask? Something strange, nay utterly untrue, is thus intruded upon my imagination. I carefully avoided seeing either Herder, Schiller, or the Dowager Duchess Amelia, in the coffin. Death is a poor portrait painter. I, for my part, de-

sire to retain in my memory a picture of my departed friends, more full of soul than their mere mask can furnish me with. I beg of you, therefore, when it is my turn, to do thus with me.

"Nor will I conceal from you that this was what was so remarkably delightful to me in Schiller's departure. Unheralded, without pomp, he came to Weimar; and without pomp did he depart thence. Parade in death is not what I like. The laying forth of the body is indeed a most ancient and venerable custom; needful for the people, and for public security. It is important that society should know not only that a man is dead, but how he died. That people die, is a thing which it would be absurd to afflict oneself about; but it imports every one of us that no life be cut short before its natural term, whether by the rapacity of heirs, or by any other cause of violence."

In the midst of this conversation August von Goethe had come in. He had been, as his father's representative, to accompany Wieland's funeral procession to Osmannstädt. From his lips we learnt more particulars of the ceremony. Goethe commended the arrangement; especially that the solemnity had been attended by members of the government, and of both courts of justice.

"It is the last honour," added he, "which we have it in our power to pay him, and to ourselves. It is a proof of a lofty and liberal tone of thought to use such occasions fitly; and, if we do nought else, we give evidence to the world that we are not unworthy to have possessed so rare a genius among us for a long series of years."

He made his son give him the most minute and accurate description of the interment, the precise spot in the garden, the stone,—every thing. Nor did he hear, without evident satisfaction, that more than five hundred persons from the surrounding villages had flocked together to-day, unbidden, to the grave of Wieland.

CHAPTER XI.

Goethe at Töplitz.—Arrival of Louis Buonaparte, King of Holland.—Their intimacy.—Goethe's opinion of Louis.—His benevolence and gentleness.—His genuine piety.—His moral sensibility.—Causes of his abdication.—His tolerance.

It was the tenth of November, 1810, shortly after Goethe retuned from Töplitz, that he communicated to me the following circumstances relating to his stay there. I wrote them down immediately, exactly as he told them.

When the King of Holland arrived, he hired the house in which Goethe was residing. Goethe would have instantly quitted it, and have vacated the whole *étage*, but the king would not permit it, protesting that at all events, he should not make any use of it.

Goethe had thus very frequent opportunities of seeing him; indeed he lived with him for a considerable time, separated only by the door of a bed-room. My memory is sufficiently faithful to enable me to give an accurate report of his opinion of the king, having written down what he said the same evening.

"Louis" said Goethe, "is a perfect incarnation of kindness and affability; as his brother Napoleon is, of force and power. Strangely indeed are the qualities of the brothers of this family mingled and apportioned. Lucian, for instance, despised a crown, and occupied himself with art at Rome. The abdication of another

crown, in such stormy times, seemed inevitable for the gentle Louis. Mildness and kindheartedness mark his very footsteps. It was therefore no obstinacy, as has been imagined, that led him to take such a decided course in opposition to his brother. On the contrary, Louis is one of the gentlest, most peaceful characters I have ever met with in the course of my life; but, as a natural consequence, every thing contrary to law, to justice, to humanity, wounds him to the inmost soul, and is revolting to his very nature. He cannot endure to see an animal tormented, a horse ill-treated, a child unhappy; you see it in his demeanour, in every feature; his blood boils at it; it makes him unhappy to witness any ungentle word or deed; nay, even to hear it recounted. Inadvertent improprieties or offences directed against his own person, he forgives much more readily. A beautifully constituted soul; a tranquil, collected temper; in the back ground, God —without the least religious fanaticism;—these are Louis's first and most essential qualities, and go to form a perfectly unspoiled, genuine character, which is in no respect the result of training or teaching, but is the spontaneous and peculiar growth of his beautiful nature. Religion shines like a silver thread through all his conversations and opinions; she brightens the dark ground of his somewhat melancholy views of life. Whatever event painfully touches his exquisite moral sensibility, thus immediately receives a gentle repulse. He rejects every thing which, according to his feeling, is unjust, and contrary to the divine commands. Hence necessarily arises a contraction of his judgment on many points; but this is abundantly outweighed by the serenity of a temper that not all the unhappy circumstances in which he has been placed could ruffle. The times are, in his opinion, most perplexed and evil; but it nowise follows that they will always remain so. One must on no account utter any maxim in his pre-

sence, which is in contradiction to any of his views of Christian morality, or has a tendency to loosen its obligations; on such occasions he is silent, reserved, and withdraws from the conversation;—always without strife or controversy.

When he came to Töplitz he was so weak that he was obliged to be led, but he grew better. How so tender and sensitive a being could succeed in fighting through the hard battle between Holland and his iron brother, without having the whole texture of his nerves torn to rags, and becoming himself the victim, is a problem I never could solve! The force of mind which thus raised and supported him above conflicting circumstances is worthy of admiration. What he thought he owed to a renowned nation, as its chief; what to himself, after he was once recognised as King of Holland, he acted up to, in opposition to France and to his brother, with all that severe, moral earnestness which is part of his nature. From the moment that Napoleon spoke of the Scheldt, the Rhine, and the Maese, as merely the great arteries of the body of the French empire; from the moment that he showed his utter disregard for the blood which the brave forefathers of the land had shed under Philip the Second, in order that Holland might be a nation, nothing remained to Louis but to quit a throne, the dignity of which he thought he could no longer uphold. This was no step set by him to excite attention or applause; on the contrary, the outward act was a mere expression of the most inward convictions of a being to whom tranquillity and the peace of a good conscience are the most inestimable of treasures;—far above the possession of a throne.

"And with this is connected another most delightful part of his character, which diffuses a singular charm over his society. You remark neither philosophy, nor an array of principles, nor any thing of the kind, in his conversation;—nothing that pre-

sents itself as harsh, rigorous, or mortifying to those who think differently; it is rather pure, kindly nature which stands before us, and yielding to its gentle impulses, discloses its own harmony and beauty. Principles imply logic, and give room for debate, doubt, and exposition; but genuine conscience knows only feeling, and goes straight forward to its object, which it tries lovingly to comprehend, and, when comprehended, never lets go again. Like the innocent flock, that seeks not to crush under foot the herbs or flowers which instinct teaches it are pernicious or poisonous, nor to tear them up with impatient rancour, but peaceably passes them by, and goes in quest of that alone which is its appropriate nutriment, and suited to its gentle, quiet nature; so did I contemplate the inclinations and aversions of a truly beautiful moral organization, before which all school-taught arts and systems must needs shrink back ashamed.

"I can say, that wherever in my life I have had the good fortune to meet with such a spectacle of true and perfect morality, it never failed to attract and edify me indescribably. As I used often to say to my friends at Töplitz, 'One never leaves the King of Holland without feeling oneself a better man.' After I had passed an hour or two in thus observing and listening to him, I felt my whole soul elevated, and said to myself, 'If this sweetly tender, and almost femininely-constituted being was capable of such things, under such over-powering public circumstances, shouldst not thou, in thy private station and narrow field of action, be capable of as much? or, at least, be able to gather courage and firmness from his example?'

"It may be anticipated that a mind of such fine moral perceptions, so formed to estimate every thing pure and noble, would have a sort of innate reverence for the character of all the northern nations—their deeds and qualities. Hence I observed in the King of Holland a silent leaning towards Prussia and Saxony.

We might question destiny—were there not other and deeper designs hid in the womb of time, than we are able to divine—why she made his brother Jerome, and not him, King of Westphalia.

"Earnestness, combined with pure morality, both exempt from the slightest harshness or severity; piety, free from all conceit, and from all gloom, from all dark alloy of fear, or of superstition; perfect rectitude combined with profound benevolence,—would not one think that this character was expressly made to form the most intimate connexion, nay combination, with all that is excellent or valuable in the German character? But it is true that even in circumstances so desirable in themselves, such native goodness of heart, could in no case (consistently with the maintenance of Louis's connexion with the French nation) long have had free and independent exercise; and that the matter must have ended there, just as it did in Holland. His kingdom is not of this world—still less of this age.

"In the king's society I met a Doctor whose opinions were somewhat characterized by abruptness; not to say, by catholic narrowness. He often talked of the Church which alone could ensure salvation. Such remarks were, however, never assented to by the king, who, as I have said, was as gentle as he was earnest and humane, and could not take part in any bigotry or one-sidedness. I always tried to command myself on these occasions; once, however, when he thought fit to utter a tirade worthy of a capuchin (such as are now the fashion) on the dangerous tendency of books and of the press, I could not refrain from answering him with the assertion, that the most dangerous of all books—if we must talk of danger—was, humanly speaking, unquestionably the Bible: for that a book could hardly be adduced which had had so powerful effect, for evil and for good, on the progress of civilization and the condition of mankind.

"I had no sooner uttered these words than I was a

little alarmed at them, for I expected no less than that the mine would explode on both sides and blow me into the air. Fortunately the result was different to what I expected. The Doctor indeed turned first pale and then red, with rage and horror; but the king commanded himself with his usual mildness and sweet temper, and only said, '*Celà perce quelquefois, que Monsieur de Goethe est hététique.*'

"While he lived at Amsterdam, the king had so perfectly adopted the feelings of a Dutchman, that he was extremely annoyed at the general neglect of their mother tongue by people of condition, who scarcely spoke any thing but French. 'If *you* will not speak Dutch,' said he to some of them, half in jest, half in earnest, 'how can you expect that any body else in the world will give himself the trouble to speak it?'"

The reader will doubtless derive great pleasure from Goethe's description of so distinguished a cotemporary and so truly noble a nature; and will, at the same time, obtain a glance of the great poet's own beautiful mind, exhibited in his calm and masterly delineation of human character. It seems to me that, even here, the hand is not to be mistaken which drew Faust, Gretchen, and Mephistopheles, with a pencil as bold as it was felicitous and delicate.

CHAPTER XII.

Kotzebue.—His "Most Remarkable Year of my Life."—Goethe's opinion of it.—Kotzebue's egotism.—His plays, "Banished Love," and "The Two Klingsbergs."—The "Corsen."—Kotzebue's intolerant vanity.—His "Tour in Italy."—History of his plot for the dethronement of Goethe.—The Exclusives of Weimar.—The Countess von E.—The contested ballad.—The rival ladies.—The Cour d'Amour.—Arrival of Kotzebue at Weimar.—Commencement of intrigues.—The temporal and spiritual courts of Japan.—Projected coronation of Schiller as first German poet.—Counterplot.—The most melancholy day in Weimar.—The inexorable Bürgermeister.—Triumph of the Patriarch.

In a conversation on literature, we fell upon Kotzebue and his "Most remarkable Year of my Life" (*Merkwürdigstes Lebensjahr.*) Putting aside the adventures of the journey, and the hard fate of the man, which demanded and deserved compassion, it was, as Goethe affirmed, scarcely possible, out of such rich and varied materials, to produce any thing more empty and inane.

"I am certain if one of us were to take a walk in spring over the fields, from Oberweimar to the Belvedere,* he would find a thousand times more of what is remarkable in nature to tell of, or to note in his sketch-book, than Kotzebue met with in his journey to the other end of the world.

* A palace of the Grand Duke.

"The reason of this is, that he is by nature incapable of getting out of himself and his own affairs, into any deeper or wider field of observations. When he arrives at a place, he gives himself not the slightest trouble about heaven or earth, air or water, animal or vegetable. Every where he finds only himself—his own sayings and doings; even at Tobolsk, you are perfectly certain that all the people are occupied either in translating his plays, studying, acting, or, at the very least, rehearsing them.

"Not that I do not do justice to his extraordinary talent for every thing technical. After the lapse of a century, it will be perceived that the sense of form was really born with Kotzebue. Pity only, that character and keeping were utterly wanting. A few weeks ago I saw his "Banished Love" (*Der verbannte Amor*,) and the performance gave me extreme pleasure. The piece is more than clever; there are traces of genius in it. The same applies to "The two Klingsbergs" (*Die beiden Klingsberge*) which I hold to be one of his most perfect dramatic works; for he is always more happy in the delineation of *libertinage* than of any true beauty of character. The corruption and profligacy of the higher classes is the element in which Kotzebue outdoes himself.

"His *Corsen*, too, is worked up with great dexterity, and the handling is all of a piece. They are great favourites with the public, and with reason. Of course, as usual, you must not ask much about the *matter*. However, technical excellencies of this kind are by no means so common among us Germans that they should be taken no account of, or be contemptuously overlooked.

"If Kotzebue had had the good sense to keep himself within the circle prescribed to him by Nature, I would be the first to defend him against unjust reproaches. We have no right to demand of any man things which Nature has not afforded him the means of performing;

but the worst of it is, he thrusts himself into a thousand things of which he understands not one word. He wants to carry the superficiality of a man of the world into the sciences; a thing which Germans, unquestionably with great justice, hold to be wholly inadmissible.

"But even this fault might be overlooked if he did not, withal, fall into the most unheard-of vanity. Which is the most extrordinary, this or the *naiveté* with which he displays it, I shall not stop to inquire. He can suffer nothing of any celebrity about him, or near him, were it a country, a city, a statue. In his 'Tour in Italy' (*Reise nach Italien*) he has abused the Laocoon, the Medicean Venus, and the poor Italians themselves, in every imaginable way. I am perfectly sure that he would have found Italy far more tolerable if it had not been so celebrated before he visited it. But here is the knot! He is half a rogue; but the other half, especially in what relates to philosophy or art, an honest man; and he cannot help trying to gull himself and others wherever he can; and that, too, with the loftiest and most gentlemanly air.

This may, perhaps, be an appropriate place for introducing a little story which had no slight influence in the subsequent production of the "Freethinker" (*Der Freimuthige.*) We will relate the whole affair, beginning by a *bon mot*, which Goethe let fall concerning Kotzebue, and which, having been kindly conveyed to the ears of the latter, laid the groundwork of the whole of this history,—a more amusing one than Kotzebue's *Aufenthalt am geistlichen Hofe zu Japan.*

It happened, about the time of Kotzebue's arrival at Weimar, that a society of distinguished persons of both sexes met weekly at Goethe's house, on the plain

by the Frauenthor, and formed one of the choicest circles in the little Residency. With the exception of Schiller, Goethe, and Meyer, the members of it were chiefly ladies. Its most remarkable ornaments were Countess and *Hofmarschallin* (court-marshalless) von E——; Fräulein von I——n, one of the maids of honour; Fräulein von W——; Frau von Schiller; Frau von Wollzogen; and Amelie von Imhoff. From the very elements of the compound, it is easy to see that the grace and delicacy of feminine manners formed as striking a characteristic of this refined society as the genius and talent of the men.

The great preponderance of the ladies had also the effect of giving a strong tinge of the Romantic to the laws they imposed on themselves. Every knight was compelled to select one of the ladies of the party as the subject of his homage; to devote himself exclusively to her service, and to lay at her feet those delicate offerings of love and fidelity which the laws of chivalry require from all true knights.

Inclination, early preference, and mutual esteem, had fixed Goethe's choice on the lovely, amiable, and intelligent Countess von E———. It will be understood, of course, that, as the knights and old mastersingers of the Wartburg lived anew in this circle on the Ilm, each must celebrate the charms of his mistress—a task not very difficult to Goethe. His beautiful song,

"Da droben auf jenem Berge," (39)

in which a spirit of plaintive tenderness, and the deep quiet feeling of mountain solitude breathe from every line, owes its origin, as it is said, to this society.

But as seven cities contended for the honour of Homer's birth, so do Jena and Weimar dispute the production of this ballad. Thus much is certain,—that Goethe brought this elegant trifle one evening into the accustomed circle, and, like a true knight, reverently

laid it at the feet of his lady. Could any one have stronger claims to it than the Countess von E———?

But what was the sequel?

Some time afterwards, came another lady (also distinguished for her talents) from Jena.

Goethe was certainly often in Jena, and was peculiarly fond of passing the early days of spring there. Spite of the inconsiderable distance from Weimar, leaf and blossom unfold themselves there at least a fortnight sooner. Now the very beginning of the song, "*Da droben auf jenem Berge*," alluded to his being on the hills of Jena; for, unfortunately, we have but one at Weimar, the lofty Ettersburg; whereas Jena, which is most romantically situated, reckons at least twenty or thirty in its environs.

But this is not all. The accomplished fair one of Jena not only came to Wiemar, but, from a strange concatenation of circumstances, visited the Countess von E———.

The conversation soon fell upon Goethe, his love for Jena, his willing visits to it, and especially the pleasure he expressed at being a guest in the house of this lady.

"And," continued the real or supposed favourite, "we have, among other things, to congratulate ourselves on the production of a song which is one of the prettiest, the most simple and graceful that ever flowed from the pen of a poet."

The curiosity of the Countess von E——— was, naturally, strongly excited by this prelude, and she inquired the title of the song. The answer was like a thunder-clap pealing down from the mountain-tops on those standing under the blue heaven and in the bright sunshine.

The Countess was, however, too much a woman of the world to lose her self-possession. She hastened with her discovery to her faithless poet, overwhelmed him with the most charming reproaches, threatened him with a formal appeal to the laws of that *Cour*

d'Amour of which he was so great an admirer, and by which he was expressly forbidden to offer his homage to more than one lady: she more particularly insisted on a charge the most cutting to Goethe as a poet;—the poverty of invention which would lead him to employ the same love-letter to express his devotion to more than one of the sex.

Goethe expressed the deepest penitence, promised reformation, and could not but assent to the justice of all the reproaches heaped upon him by the lady of his heart.

Thus delightfully was this little society governed and held together. But it was destined soon to experience a shock.

Herr Von Kotzebue had returned to Weimar. Fräulein von I——n, lady in waiting in the court of the Duchess Dowager, had made known in every possible manner her wish that he should be received into the *cotêrie* in question. She succeeded in drawing over some members to the same interest. Under these circumstances, especially as Schiller and Goethe were extremely anxious to preserve the hitherto good understanding of the party, and saw the storm which was gathering in the distance, a new article was added to the statutes, enacting, "That no member should have the power of introducing another person, whether a native or a stranger; at least not without the previously-expressed unanimous consent of the other members."

That this law was in fact aimed at Kotzebue could be a mystery to no one; but this must have been the more mortifying to him, since, being in Weimar, it was a sort of point of honour with him to be admitted into this circle. His vanity had received another wound from a chance joke of Goethe's, which had, of course, been immediately repeated to him. It is well known that in Japan, besides the temporal court of the Emperor, there is the spiritual court of the Dalai-

Lama, or Patriarch, which often exercises a superior though secret influence. Now Goethe had once said, jestingly, "It is of no use to Kotzebue that he has been received at the temporal court of Japan, if he cannot contrive to get admitted at the spiritual." Unquestionably Goethe could mean nothing by this but the little exclusive circle of which he and Schiller were the heads. However, with a man of such intense and irritable vanity as Kotzebue, it was throwing oil on the flames. Indeed he affixed a much too serious meaning to the words of a great man, thrown out in a moment of exuberant gaiety.

He now formed the determination, if he could not undermine this circle, at least to establish another "spiritual court," in opposition to it. To become himself a Dalai-Lama, or Patriarch, in such a place as Weimar, was out of the question; he had too much sagacity to attempt it; but to cause Schiller to be formally proclaimed head of German poetry, while he himself modestly kept in the back ground, this might produce an effect which might conduce to the desired end. Many accidental circumstances conspired to favour the project, and its author knew, with his usual address and cleverness, how to turn them to account.

In consequence of a somewhat equivocal explanation of Goethe's, a mutual coolness had lately prevailed between the ladies and the gentlemen of the *cotérie*. Goethe at last grew so out of humour at the pertinacity with which the former, half in jest and half in earnest, incessantly returned to the charge in favour of Kotzebue, that he expressed himself as follows:

"Laws once recognised as valid should be steadily adhered to; if not, it would be better to break up the society altogether, which perhaps would be the more advisable, since any very long-continued constancy is always difficult, if not tedious, to ladies."

Another fresh coal on the fire which was now fed

on every side! The ladies manifested great sensitiveness on this point. One of the most beautiful and captivating had given vent to her indignation against Goethe in a parody on the humour of Walleinstein:

" Wenn Seel und Leib sich trennen,
Da wird sich zeigen wo die Seele wohnt! (40)

At the same time some most unexpected difficulties presented themselves to the representation of the *Jungfrau von Orleans* at the court theatre at Weimar, so that Schiller was obliged to go to Leipsig before the performance could proceed. The iron was now hot, and only waited a dexterous hand to hammer it into form. Far and near, through the whole country, no fitter hand could have been found than that of the clever workman who at this moment coming, as if summoned express, from foreign parts, arrived at the court of Japan, and was destined to act a distinguished part in the plot. It is indeed difficult to say, as circumstances turned out, whether the furnace, so well stocked with bellows, made the first advance to him, or he to the furnace.

With the same quickness and dexterity with which Kotzebue wrote a new comedy or tragedy in a week, and produced it instantly on the stage, he now drew up the scheme of a fete to celebrate the coronation of Friedrich Schiller, not exactly in the Capitol, but in the Stadthouse of Weimar.

Scenes from the finest tragedies of the great and original poet, the *Don Carlos* the *Jungfrau von Orleans*, &c. were to come first. Spoken in the costume of the persons of the drama, they were not only to serve as an introduction to the whole performance, but to prepare and attune the minds of the audience for the grand *coup* which awaited them.

The amiable Countess von E——, the chivalrous-minded lady whom Goethe had celebrated, and done

homage to, as his sovereign mistress, in so many an elegant and intellectual society, but who in her indignation now took occasion to repay the infidelity of the "*Schäfer auf jenem Berge,*" willingly undertook the part of the Maid of Orleans. The Fräulein von Imhoff, the distinguished author of the "Sisters of Lesbos" (*Schwestern von Lesbos,*) could not possibly refuse to appear as the representative of the lovely and unfortunate Queen of Scots. The amiable Sophia Mereau, another very sweet poetess, known to fame in "Schiller's Almanack," was, if I mistake not, to recite the Song of the Bell (*Die Glocke.*)

Kotzebue himself was to appear in two characters; first as Father Thibaut, in the "Maid of Orleans," and then as the Master Bell-founder. In the latter character he was to strike the mould of the bell, which was made of pasteboard, with his hammer, with such force as to break it in pieces. This moment, which, in the real scene discloses the smooth and perfect metal within, was to exhibit to the spectators the grand and critical point for which all was so skilfully prepared. As soon as the Master had given the last stroke, the mould was to fall into pieces, and to surprise them with the sight of Schiller's bust, which, in the presence of Schiller himself, was to be crowned—by fair hands, of course.

The picturesque disposition of the whole representation was under the direction of Herr Krause, a landscape-painter of some merit, long attached to the court of the Dowager, and director of the Ducal Academy of design.

After all these happy suggestions and contrivances, who could doubt that the result would be most brilliant? I would have staked my life upon it, and should sooner have dreamt of the sky falling, than of the total failure of so admirably-contrived a festival of art.

Accordingly, the most laudable activity reigned in

all the first houses in Weimar. Dresses and parts, trimmings and passages from Schiller, were so carefully selected, so tastefully cut out and put together, that an elegant and well-rounded Whole grew into existence.

Mean while the appointed day grew nigh. Wieland, the most obliging of men on such occasions, was already invited, and had accepted the invitation.

Means had also been found to obtain a promise from the Princess Caroline (afterwards hereditary Princess of Mecklenburg, whose early loss all who knew her amiable qualities deplored, and for whom Goethe had a singular respect,) that she would be present. Friedrich Schiller too was most pressingly invited, but said a few days before in Goethe's house, "I shall send word I am ill." To this Goethe made no reply, and remained perfectly silent.

There were not wanting, however, prudent friends, who, to their great regret, could not help foreseeing that these affairs would bring about a coolness between these two great men. The end of it could hardly be foreseen, especially in case Schiller should fall into the toils set to catch his noble, simple character. The preparations for the festival had now gone to such a length, that it was thought expedient to proceed to an epistolary treaty with the directors of the library, concerning the bust of Schiller; for this bust (which is still to be seen there,) executed by Danneker, and, if I mistake not, presented to the library by Goethe, was to serve for the *coup de théatre* already spoken of.

The treaty was conducted by the two professors and painters, Meyer and Krause. But here arose an unexpected and ominous difficulty, which the worthy Krause at least was quite unable to remove.

Meyer shortly remarked, in his answer to Krause's request, "that the rules of the library, as was well known to every body, would by no means permit him

to suffer a work of art, of such value and merit, to be removed, especially to a place where the very nature of the entertainment must occasion a certain degree of confusion and tumult. It might also be suggested whether, as a question of good taste, Schiller would really feel himself so much honoured by a representation of his idea of the '*Glocke*' in pasteboard, as seemed to be expected."

A piece of lighted tinder thrown into a powder magazine could hardly cause greater consternation than this note produced among the ladies and gentlemen who were impatiently expecting a favourable answer to their petition. Meyer, as an old and intimate friend of Goethe, could not, it was said, write or act otherwise. That was so clear and manifest that a child of any sense would have foreseen it, especially when it was remembered that Goethe himself was one of the great supporters of the library of Weimar.

Be that as it might, the question was now agitated whether it would not be more easy to get possession of Schiller himself, for the solemnity, than of his bust. But, violent as was the first shock to all hopes and wishes, it was nothing to the one which awaited them.

The day before that fixed for the performance, the parties interested wrote a polite letter to the chief acting Bürgermeister, Schulze, to request him to send the key of the new stadthouse, in which the whole of the splendid spectacle was to be exhibited.

The answer, written in the name of the magistracy, was truly official, but by no means agreeable. It purported, "That the erection of a stage in the new hall of the stadthouse was perfectly inadmissible;—that it would injure the walls, the roof, and the floor, which was newly laid: the magistrates regretted extremely that, under these circumstances, they could not comply with the request," &c. &c. &c.

All representations, all assurances of care, nay, even

an engagement to repair whatever damage might ensue, were vain, and were utterly unable to bend the stubbornness and pertinacity of the acting Bürgermeister. To the most moving entreaties, he, with immoveable calmness, opposed the rigorous execution of his duty; in short, the heart of this high official personage, though beset with storms of every kind, remained impregnable, and as close shut against all assaults as the door of the new stadthouse—the key of which he held in his hand.

Rarely has so melancholy, so disastrous a day risen on the gay world of Weimar. To see the fairest most brilliant hopes thus crushed at a blow, when so near to their fulfilment, what was it but to be wrecked in sight of port? Let the reader but imagine the now utterly useless expenditure of crape, gauze, ribands, lace, beads, flowers which the fair creatures had made; not to mention the pasteboard for the bell, the canvass, colours and brushes for the scenes, the wax candles for lighting, &c. Let him think of the still greater outlay of time and trouble, requisite for the learning so many and such various parts; let him figure to himself a captivating Mary Stuart, a majestic Maid of Orleans, a lovely Agnes, so suddenly so unexpectedly compelled to descend from the pinnacle of glory, and, in an evil moment, to lay aside crown and sceptre, helm and banner, dress and ornament—and he will admit that never was fate more cruel.

In these days of universal mourning in Weimar, many a white pair of hands were to be seen supporting a pretty head, through which the most gloomy meditations on the disappointments of the world, the mockeries of fate, and the perverse current of human affairs, were crowding.

The whole transaction gave birth to a charming little mock-heroic poem, in the style of Pope's "Rape of the Lock," or Gresset's "*Vert-Vert.*"

Think only,—three queens of hearts thus unde-

servedly deposed in one day! No—he who is not moved by so dire a mischance, which followed the Muses and Graces into their own seat—he can never more claim rank or title in this our German republic of letters.

Less compassion seemed due to Father Thibaut, who, though a great master of intrigue, had for once found a greater master still. The whole affair, if well handled, might furnish a theme for something extremely diverting.

As the Patriarch of Japan had predicted in the beginning that the Spiritual Court would maintain its supremacy, even so it happened. The means which were employed, and the first invisible threads which eventually united to form a web of inextricable difficulty for the adversary, are indeed, as in all cases where chance plays the first part, veiled in a sacred obscurity from vulgar eyes. But, on the other hand, it was impossible not to admire the activity and skill which, under the form of a bell, sought to conceal a mine by which the Patriarch of Japan and his whole court were to be blown into the air.

The plot was, however, discovered in time by the venerable chief and his friends, who found means to defeat it by a secret and silent countermine. Father Thibaut was indeed no less amazed and confounded when this thunderbolt fell, than of yore, when as the bells were ringing in celebration of the coronation feast at Orleans, lightning struck the tower of the cathedral, at the very moment he was about to enter it, with the laudable design of denouncing his daughter as a witch.

Should history ever record the fierce siege laid to the fortress of the Patriarch, and its skilful and successful defeat, it is to be hoped the historian will not forget to make honourable mention of Bürgermeister, Schulze's gallant and obstinate defence of the Stadthaus hall.

Frau von W ———, Schiller's sister-in-law, the distinguished author of *Agnes von Lilien*, on hearing that, shortly after this affair, Kotzebue received the title of *Rath* (Councillor) of Weimar, said, very wittily, in allusion to a passage in the "Death of Wallenstein," (*Wallensteins Tod*) "His diploma ought to have been subscribed, *Rath Piccolomini*."*

With what animation and enthusiasm Goethe's aspect, even at a very advanced period of his life, inspired the young, may be seen in the following remarkable letter of a boy of sixteen:

"Weimar, February 20, 1822.

"Dearest Friend,

"I should have written to you long ago; but I delayed from time to time, because I would not write till I had seen Goethe, for a glimpse of whom I had so longing a desire.

* There is an account of this ludicrous transaction in the *Tag- und-Jahres Hefte* (1802,) told in Goethe's tone of quiet superiority. I thought of extracting it, but the meannesses and squabbles of men of genius, or even of talent, are an unwelcome subject. Besides, Kotzebue is fallen into such complete contempt in Germany, that it is not worth while to dwell on the tricks of his vanity. Having alluded more than once to Mr. William Taylor's Survey of German Poetry, and uniting, as I do, admiration for that gentleman's learning and talents, to, I might almost say, hereditary respect for his person and character, I must in honesty confess that I dissent entirely from his view of the general tendencies of German literature; and particularly from his estimate of Goethe and Kotzebue, which, indeed, to all educated Germans, appears the strangest and most extravagant paradox.

"For two months I walked past his house every day; but in vain. It was indeed a great delight to me even to see his daughter-in-law with her lovely children at the window; but I wanted to see Goethe himself. One Sunday I had been taking a walk; my way home lay at the back of Goethe's house, by his garden. The garden gate stood open, and curiosity tempted me in. Goethe was not in the garden; but in a short time I saw his servant come in. I shut the garden gate for fear the man should see me. As I was thinking afterwards, very sadly, how all my endeavours to see Goethe had failed, I suddenly remarked another garden gate which likewise stood open; and as I entered at it, I soon perceived that this was the neighbour's garden, the wall of which abutted on Goethe's, so that the walks of both were clearly to be seen from it. The circumstance was so propitious that I suddenly took courage, and asked the man to whom this house belonged, whether Goethe often walked in his garden, and at what time of day? He answered, every day, when the weather was fine: the hour, however, was not always the same—that often at ten o'clock, if the sun was out, the *Geheimrath** was there; but that about noon, especially, he loved to be in his garden. The old gentleman held, as it seemed, with the hottest of the sunshine.

"Hereupon I questioned the good neighbour farther, to see how he stood disposed, and whether he would give me permission to visit his garden daily for half an hour, that I might see and watch the Great Poet—the man whom I so deeply reverenced.

"He answered me, quite indifferently, 'Why not? he could have no objection.' It is, however, wonderful, dear friend, that people must pay half a gulden to see a tiger, a bear, or a wild cat; while the sight of a Great Man, the rarest thing of the world, is to be

* Privy Councillor.

had for nothing! I went home full of joy; and that night could not close my eyes.

"It seemed to me as if I, little dwarf as I was, had suddenly, through this hope of seeing a Great Man, grown a hand's breadth at least. The morning I thought would never come;—the night seemed to me as long as a week, and longer. At length day broke, and brought the loveliest spring weather. When I saw the sun shine I thought,—this is a fine day for Goethe;—and I was not mistaken.

"It was past ten when I reached the garden. He was there already, walking up and down. My heart beat violently. When I saw him, I thought I beheld Faust and Gretchen in one person; at once so gentle and so majestic did he look! I had my eyes ever fixed upon him, that I might stamp his features well on my heart. And thus did I look at him for a whole hour by the clock, with keen, unaverted eyes, without his being once aware of me—by which indeed he lost nothing. When I had thus, as it were, lost myself in him, he gave me the slip, and went into the house again, and up stairs into his study, which is quite separate, with windows looking into a back court.

"Dearest friend, be well assured, Goethe's greatness manifests itself in his whole form and aspect. He is still hale and active as a man of forty. His majestic gait, his straight and lofty forehead, the noble form of his head, his fiery eye, arched nose—all about him cries aloud, Faust, Margarethe, Götz, Iphigenie, Tasso, and I know not what besides. Never did I see so handsome and vigorous a man of so advanced an age.

"I see him, when the weather is fine, daily in his garden; and that is as great a delight and amusement to me as it is to others to look at busts, and fine pictures, and beautiful engravings. You may believe me or not, as you please; but when I tell you that I had

rather see him than all the engravings and pictures in the world, I tell you only the pure and naked truth.

"He usually goes up and down the garden-walks with slow steps, without sitting; but often stops over against some plant or flower, and stands still for half an hour at a time, observing or meditating. Could I but guess his thoughts and his discourse with himself at such moments! Then, when he turns away from the plants and flowers, he sometimes goes to play with his sweet grand-children.

"I speak with Goethe through my eyes, though he sees me not; for I stand behind a hedge, hidden from him by the bushes. This all sounds very strange and romantic, but it is truly thus. And, indeed, thus is it well; and better than if I had really seen him and spoken with him;—*I* well know why. For suppose he condescended to talk with me,—what in all the world could a boy of sixteen, like me, be to him in conversation? He talk to *me!* He has something better to do, indeed!

"Oh, my most honoured friend, if you were but here for once—in the garden, and by my side! How happy shall I be when it is really spring; when the buds burst; then will I diligently watch Goethe's conversation with the flowers, and the birds, and the light, in his nearer intercourse with nature; and I will write you all that I know about it, and all that I can so much as guess.

"Yours," &c.

NOTES.

Note 1.

The Life of Curran by his son, contains the following passage:

"His mother, whose maiden name was Philpot, belonged to a family well known and respected, and of which the descendants continue in the class of gentry. She was a woman of a strong original understanding, and of admitted superiority in the circles where she moved. In her latter years, the celebrity of her son rendered her an object of additional attention and scrutiny; and the favourers of the opinion that talent is hereditary thought they could discover, in the bursts of irregular eloquence that escaped her, the first visible gushings of the stream which, expanding as it descended, at length attained a force and grandeur that incited the admirer to explore its source. This persuasion Mr. Curran himself always fondly cherished:—'The only inheritance' (he used to say) 'that I could boast of from my poor father, was the very scanty one of an unattractive face and person, like his own; and if the world has ever attributed to me something more valuable than face or person, or than earthly wealth, it was that another and a dearer parent gave her child a portion from the treasure of her mind.' He attributed much of his subsequent fortune to the early influence of such a mother, and to his latest hour would dwell with grateful recollection upon the wise counsel, upon the lessons of honourable ambition, and of sober masculine piety, which she enforced upon the minds of her children. She was not without her reward. She lived to see the dearest of them surpassing every presage, and accumulating public honours

upon a name which she in her station had adorned by her virtues."—*Life of Curran, by his Son, p.* 4.

The mother of the Schlegels is said to have been a remarkable woman, and to have contributed greatly to form the character of her accomplished sons.

In our own country examples enough in support of this theory might be found. Canning and Brougham are the most recent I remember.

Note 2.

Georg Melchior Krause was born in 1733, at Frankfurt on the Main, and was a pupil of the celebrated Tischbein. He studied for five years in Paris. In 1775 he was appointed Director of the free School of Design at Weimar, a post which he retained up to the time of his death, November, 1806. He died in consequence of the brutal treatment he received from some French soldiers, who burst into his house after the battle of Jena. He accompanied Gore the English traveller, who resided at Weimar, on a tour through Tyrol and the north of Italy. Gore and Krause were also with Goethe at the siege of Mainz, in 1793, and there is in existence a coloured engraving of the siege by Krause. Goethe says in the *Campagne in Frankreich*, 1793, "The siege of Mainz, as an extraordinary event *in which calamity itself promised to be picturesque*, enticed my two friends thither," &c. Gore, who seems to have been a great favourite with Goethe, was the original of his exquisitely finished portrait of the travelled Englishman, in the *Wahlverwandschaften*.

Krause used to work up for Goethe his pictorial fancies, some of which were extremely curious and wild. Some notice of them may be found among other interesting matter in the series of papers on Goethe's works which have lately appeared in the Monthly Repository.

I have found no other mention of Krause in Goethe's works than the following, in the *Zweyter Aufenthalt in Rom*, February, 1788. Just after the celebrated description of the carnival, he says that, as a memorial of the scene, he had employed his countryman Georg Schütz to draw and colour all the masks he could obtain. "These drawings," he adds, "were afterwards engraved and coloured after the originals, by Melchoir Krause, of Frankfurt on the main, Director of the free Academy of Design at Weimar."

There is an interesting little biographical memoir of Gore inserted in Goethe's life of Philip Hackert, the artist, with whom Gore lived in great intimacy at Rome. It concludes in these words:

"The presence of this excellent man is to be remembered among the greatest advantages this town (Weimar) has, of late years, enjoyed. His personal qualities had a uniformly beneficent influence. He was simple, friendly, and obliging to every one; even at an advanced age, his countenance and person made a most agreeable impression. His fortune enabled him to surround himself with comforts and conveniences, and to show himself liberal to all,—to give encouragement to industry and talent, and succour to distress. The perfect uniformity of his behaviour rendered his society equable and agreeable; and even when he was suffering from gout, he was cheerful, sympathizing, and amusing."

He died at Weimar, and is buried there, with two of his daughters. His youngest daughter married Lord Cowper, at Florence. The whole family were great favourites with the court of Weimar.

The following curious description of a fancy of Goethe's has been kindly given me by a friend:

"In 1810, I saw, in the hands of my friend Aldebert, at Frankfurt, a caricature in water colours, executed by Mrs. A's uncle, Kraus of Weimar; but I learned from Herr von Knebel, afterwards, that the caricature was the invention of Goethe himself. It included a number of figures, of which I retain but a very imperfect recollection. One group consisted of a procession of young men, following a hearse, each with a pistol at his head. No explanation of this is necessary. Another procession is formed of two youths, in old German costume, on two prancing steeds; in front real horses, but the rear cast into shadow, being a long board. The heroes, in fact, were riding, like children, a cock-horse. These, I was told, were the two Counts Stolberg, who, in their youth, were famed as patriotic poets. One afterwards acquired a sad celebrity, by turning catholic. A third group was an owl perched on a German oak, below which was a duck, greedily swallowing what fell. I understood this to allude to a book written by Ebers, in idolatrous praise of Klopstock, with the fantastic title of *Er, und über ihn* (He, and about him;) and I have some faint impression that these little words were traced on the ground by what the duck was devouring with such alacrity."

H. C. R.

Note 3.

In Goethe's *Tag-und-Jahers Hefte* (a sort of literary journal,) A.D. 1802, I find the following notice of the death of this charming woman and actress:—"But while art flourished on our stage in all the freshness and activity of youth, a death occurred among us which I think it a duty to record.

"Corona Schroeder* died, and as I did not feel in a state of mind to consecrate to her memory a tribute worthy of her merits, I thought with great satisfaction and a sort of wonder, that so many years ago I had erected a monument to her, than which I could not now even design any thing more characteristic. It was on occasion of another death, that of Mieding, the stage decorator; and was written in a tone of serious cheerfulness, if I may so speak for my beautiful friend. Well do I remember this monody, neatly written out on black-edged paper for the Tieffurt Journal. It was, however, of no ill omen to Corona; her lovely person, her gay joyous spirit, remained unbroken for many years. She should have staid longer to adorn and delight a world from which she retired too soon."

The following is the passage from the poem called *Miedings Tod*, in which Goethe has so beautifully, and as he says, "characteristically," enshrined her memory.

I have hesitated long whether, as I cannot write verse, I should subjoin any translation of this and other poems. I am advised to risk the publication of such as I can give, for the convenience of those who do not read German. It would give me extreme pain that they should be regarded as intended in any degree to represent Goethe's poems. They are intended merely to illustrate the text by showing what is the *matter* of those poems. It is so obvious that they pretend to nothing but fidelity—I might say literalness—that any apology for them would seem to me like soliciting criticism, of which they are not deserving. I have followed the verse, as nearly as possible, line for line; but to remove any appearance of pretension to a rhythmical form I have not put capitals at the beginning of the lines. This extract, the original of which is in heroic measure, is, I think, by far the worst specimen. In some unrhymed metres it will perhaps be found that the English takes the form and colour of the German more easily.

* So spelt in the original.—*Transl.*

Extract from "*Miedings Tod.*"

Ihr Freunde, Platz! Weicht einen kleinen Schritt!
Seht, wer da kommt und festlich näher tritt?
Sie ist es selbst, die Gute fehlt uns nie,
Wir sind erhört, die Musen senden sie.
Ihr kennt sie wohl: sie ist's, die stets gefällt;
Als eine Blume zeigt sie sich der Welt:
Zum Muster wuchs das schöne Bild empor,
Vollendet nun, si ist's und stellt es vor.
Es gönnten ihr die Musen jede Gunst,
Und die Natur erschuf in ihr die Kunst,
So häuft sie willig jeden Reiz auf sich,
Und selbest dein Name ziert, CARONA, dich.
Sie tritt herbei. Seht sie gefällig stehn!
Nur absichtslos, doch wie mit Absicht schön.
Und hoch erstaunt, seht ihr in ihr vereint
Ein Ideal, das Künstlern nur erscheint.
Anständig führt die leis' erhobne Hand
Den schönsten Kranz, umknüpft von Trauerband,
Der Rose frohes, volles Angesicht,
Das treue Veilchen, der Narcisse Licht,
Vielfält' ger Nelken, eitler Tulpen Pracht,
Von Mädchenhand geschickt hervorgebracht,
Durchschlungen von der Myrte santer Zier,
Vereint die Kunst zum Trauerschmucke hier:
Und durch den schwarzen, leichtgeknüpften Flor
Sticht eine Lorbeerspitze still hervor.
Es schweigt das Volk. Mit Augen voller Glanz
Wirft sie ins Grab den wohlverdienten Kranz.
Sie öffnet ihren Mund, und lieblich fliesst,
Der weiche Ton der sich ums Herz ergiesst.
Sie spricht: den Dank für das, was du gethan,
Geduldet, nimm, du Abgeschiedner, an!
De Gute, wie der Böse, müht sich viel,
Und beide bleiben weit von ihrem Ziel.
Dir gab ein Gott in holder, steter Kraft
Zu deiner Kunst die ew'ge Leidenschaft.
Sie war's, die dich zur bösen Zeit erhielt,
Mit der du Krank, als wie ein Kind, gespielt,
Die auf den blassen Mund ein Lächeln rief,
In deren Arm dein müdes Haupt entschlief!
Ein jeder, dem Natur ein gleiches gab,
Besuche pilgernd dein bescheiden Grab!
Fest steh dein Sarg in wohlgegönnter Ruh',
Mit lockrer Erde deckt ihn leise zu;
Und sanfter, als des Lebens, liege dann
Auf dir des Grabes Bürde, guter Mann?

TRANSLATION.

Room, friends;—give way a little space.
See who comes, approaching with solemn step.
'Tis she herself! The sweet one fails us never;
our prayers are heard; the Muses send her.
You know her well—know her unvarying charm;
like a bright flower she blossoms to the world!
The exquisite form grew up as a model;
consummate now, she presents herself as one before us.
On her the Muses lavished all their gifts,
and Art, in her, is Nature's own work.
Thus easily does she appropriate every charm;
and e'en thy name, CORONA, adorns thee.
She steps forward. See her attractive grace!
Without design—yet, as if with design, beautiful;
and, wandering, you see in her combined
an Ideal such as appears only to the artist's fancy.
Gracefully does the softly-raised hand present
the fairest wreath, entwined with mourning bands;
the gladful countenance of the rose,
the faithful violet, the bright narcissus,
the dappled pink, the splendour of the vain tulip,
skilfully grouped by maiden hands,
and blended with the softer grace of the myrtle,
Art here entwines as a funereal ornament;
and through the black, transparent crape
the laurel silently peops forth.
The people are silent! with bright, beaming eyes
she throws into the grave the well-earned wreath.
She opens her lips, and sweetly gushes forth
that liquid tone which pours itself around the heart.
She speaks! The thanks for that which thou hast done
or suffered, accept, Oh thou departed!
The good man, like the bad, toils wearily,
and both remain far from the wished-for goal.
Some God gave thee, in kindly constant force,
the imperishable passion for thine art.
This was it that sustained thee in evil times;
this was it that thou play'dst with like a child;
which called a smile upon thy pallid lips;
in whose arms thy weary head reposed.
Let every one to whom Nature has given the like
visit thy modest grave in pilgrimage.
Untroubled be thy bier in well-earned peace.
With light earth cover it gently;
and, softer than that of life, lie on thee
the burden of the grave thou worthy man!

Goethe roceived the intelligence of Corona Schroeter's death in Switzerland. His tender regrets for his lovely, intelligent, and affectionate pupil are exquisitely expressed in his *Euphrosyne*. I must resist the temptation of inserting the whole poem. The following lines are a specimen of it:

Sieh, die Scheidende zieht durch Wald und grauses Gebirge,
Sucht den wandernden Mann, ach! in der Ferne noch auf;
Sucht den Lehrer, den Freund, den Vater; blicket noch einmal
Nach dem leichten Gerüst irdischer Freuder zurück.
Lass mich der Tage gedenken, da mich, das Kind, du dem Spiele
Jener täuschenden Kunst reizender Musen geweiht.
Lass mich den Stunde gedenken, und jedes kleineren Umstands.
Ach, wer ruft nicht so gern unwiederbringliches an!
Jenes süsse Gedränge der leichtesten irdischen Tage,
Ach wer schätzt ihn genug, diesen vereilenden Werth!
Klein erscheinet es nun, doch ach! nicht kleinlich dem Herzen;
Macht die Liebe, die Kunst, jegliches Kleine doch gross.

TRANSLATION.

See the departing one comes, through forests, and over frightful mountains; seeks out the wanderer, alas! at a distance; seeks her teacher, her friend, her father: once more turns her eyes back to the light fabric of earthly joys. "Let me think on the days when thou devotedst me, a child, to the exercise of that illusive art of the enchanting Muse. Let me think on the hour, and on every smallest circumstance—Ah! who loves not thus to recall the irrevocable? That sweet throng of the lightsomest earthly days—who prizes it enough —that swift-fleeting value? Little seems it now—but oh not trifling to the heart! Love, Art, makes each smallest thing great.

Note 4.

Goethe says, in his *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*, A.D. 1790, "I found some compensation for the want of objects of art, in the observation of nature, and the study of a wide field of science. The *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* (Metamorphosis of Plants) was written to lighten my heart. I hoped, by publishing it, to afford to scientific men a *specimen pro loco*. A botanic garden was planned.

"Picturesque colouring was, at the same time, one of my objects of study, and on recurring to the first physical elements of this branch of science, I discovered, to my great astonishment, that *the Newtonian hypothesis was false, and would not hold.* More accurate investigation only confirmed me in my persuasion, and thus I was inoculated with a fever for discovery, which had the greatest influence on my future life and pursuits."

In 1793, he says (after mentioning the first conception of his inimitable version of *Reinecke Fuchs*,) "The *Farbenlehre* (Theory of Colours,) too, accompanied me to the Rhine, and in the open air, under a bright sky, I continually gained fresh views concerning the various conditions under which colour appears.

"This variety, compared with my limited capacity of observation, comprehension, arrangement, and combination, suggested to me the necessity of a society. I thought out such a one in all its details; marked out the objects to be pursued, and finally showed in what manner we might soonest co-operate to the attainment of our end. This project I laid before my brother-in-law, Schlosser, whom I met in Heidelberg, following the victorious army after the surrender of Mainz. I was most unpleasantly surprised when this veteran man of practice burst into a hearty laugh at me, and declared that, in the world generally, and in our dear German fatherland particularly, a common, disinterested co-operation in an object of pure science was not to be thought of. I, on the other hand, though no longer young, maintained my ground like a true believer; whereupon he told me many particulars which I then rejected, but of which I have since had experience more than enough. And so I, for my own part, held fast to these studies, as to a plank in a shipwreck; for I had now, for two years, personally and directly experienced the most dreadful disruption of all ties. One day in head quarters at home, and one day in conquered Mainz, were symbols of the actual history of the world."*

† See another account of this same interview in the *Campagne in Frankreich*.

In 1797, after mentioning the publication of *Hermann und Dorothea*, he adds, "I wrote the new *Pausanias* and the *Metamorphose der Pflanzen* in elegiac form." This beautiful poem I subjoin, with a literal translation.

Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen.

Dich verweirret, Geliebte, die tausendfältige Mischung
  Dieses Blumengewühls über dem Garten umher;
Viele Namen hörest du an, und immer verdränget.
  Mit barbarischem Klang einer den andern im Ohr.
Alle Gestalten sind ähnlich, und keine gleichet der andern;
  Und so deutet das Chor auf ein geheimes Gesetz,
Auf ein heiliges Räthsel. O, könnt 'ich dir, liebliche Freundin,
  Ueberliefern sogleich glücklich das lösende Wort!—
Werdend betrachte sie nun, wie nach und nach sich die Pflanze
  Stufenweise geführt, bildet zu Blüthen und Frucht.
Aus dem Samen entwickelt sie sich, sobald ihn der Erde
  Stille befruchtender Schoos hold in das Leben entlässt,
Und dem Reize des Lichts, des heiligen, ewig bewegten,
  Gleich den zärtesten Bau keimender Blätter empfiehlt.
Einfach schlief in dem Samen die Kraft; ein beginnendes Vorbild
  Lag, verschlossen in sich, unten die Hülle gebeugt,
Blatt und Wurzel und Keim, nur halb geformet und farblos;
  Trocken erhält so der Kern ruhiges Leben bewahrt;
Quillet strebend empor, sich milder Feuchte vertrauend,
  Und erhebt sich vogleich aus der umgebenden Nacht.
Aber einfach bleibt die Gestalt der ersten Erscheinung;
  Und so bezeichnet sich auch unter den Pflanzen das Kind.
Gleich darauf ein folgender Trieb, sich erhebend, erneuet,
  Knoten auf Knoten gethürmt, immer das erste Gebild.
Zwar nicht immer das gleiche; denn mannigfaltig erzeugt sich,
  Ausgebildet, du siehst's, immer das folgende Blatt,
Ausgedehnter, gekerbter, getrennter, in Spitzen und Theile,
  Die verwachsen vorher ruhten im untern Organ.
Und so erreicht es zuerst die höchst bestimmte Vollendung,
  Die bei manchem Geschlecht dich zum Erstaunen bewegt.
Viel gerippt und gezackt, auf mastig strotzender Fläche,
  Scheinet die Fülle des Triebs frei und unendlich zu seyn.
Doch hier hält die Natur, mit mächtigen Händen, die Bildung
  An, und lenket sie sanft in das Vollkommnere hin.
Mässiger leitet sie nun den Saft, verengt die Gefässe,
  Und gleich zeigt die Gestalt zärtere Wirkungen an.

Stille zieht sich der Trieb der strebenden Ränder zurücke,
Und die Rippe des Stiels bildet sich völliger aus.
Blattlos aber und schnell erhebt sich der zärtere Stengel,
Und ein Wundergebild zieht den Betrachtenden an.
Rings im Kreise stellet sich nun, gezählet und ohne
Zahl, das kleinere Blatt neben dem ähnlichen hin.
Um die Achse gedrängt, entscheidet der bergende Kelch sich
Der zur höchsten Gestalt farbige Kronen entlässt.
Also prangt die Natur in hoher, voller Erscheinung,
Und sie zeiget, gereiht, Glieder an Glieder gestuft.
Immer erstaunst du auf's neue, so bald sich am Stengel die Blume
Ueber dem schlanken Gerüst wechselnder Blätter bewegt.
Aber die Herrlichkeit wird des neuen Schaffens Verkündung.
Ja, das farbige Blatt fühlet die göttliche Hand,
Und zusammen zieht es sich schnell; die zärtesten Formen,
Zwiefach streben sie vor, sich zu vereinen bestimmt.
Traulich stehen sie nun, die holden Paare, beisamen,
Zahlreich ordnen sie sich um den geweihten Altar.
Hymen schwebet herbei, und herrliche Düfte, gewaltig,
Strömen süssen Geruch, alles belebend, umher.
Nun vereinzelt schwellen sogleich unzählige Keime,
Hold in den Mutterschoos schwellender Früchte gehüllt.
Und hier schliesst die Natur den Ring der ewigen Kräfte;
Doch ein neuer sogleich fasset den vorigen an,
Dass die Kette sich fort durch alle Zeiten verlänge,
Und das Ganze belebt, so wie das Einzelne sey.
Wende nun, o Geliebte, den Blick zum bunten Gewimmel,
Das verwirrend nicht mehr sich vordem Geiste bewegt.
Jede Pflanze verkündet dir nun die ew'gen Gesetze,
Jede Blume, sie spricht lauter und lauter mit dir.
Aber entzifferst du hier der Göttin heilige Lettern,
Ueberall siehst du sie dann, auch in verändertem Zug.
Kriechend zaudre der Raupe, der Schmetterling eile geschäftig,
Bildsam ändre der Mensch selbst die bestimmte Gestalt,
O, gedenke denn auch, wie aus dem Keim der Bekanntschaft
Nach und nach in uns holde Gewohnheit entsprass,
Freundschaft sich mit Macht in unserm Inneon enthüllte,
Und wie Amor zuletzt Blüthen und Früchte gezeugt.
Denke, wie mannigfach bald die, bald jene Gestalten,
Still entfaltend, Natur unsern Gefühlen geliehn!
Freue dich auch des heutigen Tags! Die heilige Liebe
Strebt zu der höchsten Frucht gleicher Gesinnungen auf,
Gleicher Ansicht der Dinge, damit in harmonischem Anschaun
Sich verbinde das Paar, finde die höhere Welt.

Metamorphosis of Plants.

Thee perplexes, beloved, the thousandfold intermixture
of this flowery throng, around in the garden.
Many names hearest thou, and ever one chases the other,
with barbarian sound, out of the listener's ear.
All the forms are resembling, and no one is *like* to another;
and thus does the chorus point to a mysterious law,
a holy riddle. Oh, could I to thee, lovely friend,
at once happily impart the solving word!
Mark now the progress—how by degrees the plant
step-wise led up, forms itself to blossom and to fruit.
Out of the seed it unfolds itself, soon as the earth
softly lets it forth into life, out of her fructifying lap;
and to the attraction of light, the holy, the eternally-moving
commends the tenderest structure of budding leaves.
Simple slept in the seed the (germinating) power; an incipient fore-
type
lay enfolded within itself, compressed within the husk,
root, and leaf, and bud; only half formed and colourless;
thus does the dry kernel protect the silent life;
it shoots, striving upwards, trusting itself to the gentle moisture,
and soon rears itself out of surrounding night.
But simple remains the form in its earliest appearance,
and thus, even among plants, is infancy distinguished.
Quickly, then, a successive impulse, arising, repeats
joint upon joint, built up; ever the primitive type.
Not indeed always the same; for manifold shoots forth,
fashioned out, as thou seest, leaf succeeding to leaf;
more outspread, more indented, more distinct in points and in parts,
which formerly slept scarce shaped, in the lowermost organ.
And so attains it, at first, its highest destined completion,
which, in many a tribe, awakens thy mind to amazement.
Variously ribbed and jagged, on the juicy exuberant surface
free and infinite seems the impulse which causes the growth.
But now, Nature, with powerful hand, suddenly checks the forma-
tion,
and gently diverts it towards a higher perfection.
In slenderer streams now leads she the sap, the vessels she narrows,
and quickly the structure betrays the more delicate workings.
The vigorous outshooting force of the branches softly relaxes,
and the frame of the stem takes a more perfect consistence.
Leafless, however, and rapid, up darts the slenderer flower-stalk,
and a wonderful picture attracts the observer's eye.

Round in a circle now range themselves, counted or countless,
the lesser leaves, each next to one like it.
The sheltering calix, pressed round a centre, unfolds,
and, to finish the work, lets forth the gay crloured crown.
And now Nature blooms, in her highest fullest magnificence,
and limb on limb she displays, upreared in beautiful series.
Ever thy wonder is new, as, on the flower-stalk, the flower
waves above the slender framework of changing leaves.
But this glorious show is the herald of new operations;
yes, the gay coloured leaf feels the all-powerful hand.
Quickly now it shrinks up; the most delicate forms
then on each side strive forward, towards their destined union.
Fondly stand they together, the affianced beautiful couples,
or in numbers around the holy altar are ranged.
Hymen hovers near, and exquisite odours
stream around, with sweet all-quickening power.
Now, compacted together, swell countless distinct germs
of the swelling fruit, in the lap of the bountiful mother.
And here Nature closes the ring of her eternal powers;
but a new one instantly enlinks itself on the former,
that the chain may be lengthened out through all time,
and that the Whole may have life, as well as each several Being.
And now, oh beloved, turn thine eye on the many-hued throng
which no longer moves in perplexing confusion before thee.
Every plant now proclaims to thee immutable laws;
every flower now speaks clearer and clearer to thee.
But if here thou decipher'st the sacred letters of the Goddess,
every where wilt thou see them, though in differing forms.
Creeping may loiter the grub, swift fly the butterfly,
man, with plastic powers, may change his determined form.
Oh bethink thee then, too, how, out of the germ of acquaintance,
by little and little in us the affectionate usage* arose;
how, in our inmost hearts, friendship then strongly revealed itself,
and how love, at last, brought us his flowers and his fruit.
Think, how manifold-wise, now this, now the other form,
silently unfolding, Nature has lent to our feelings!
Rejoice in the day that is! holy Love strives
after the loftiest fruit of equal, resembling minds,
of similar views of things—whereby in harmonious insight
those who love may be one—may find the Higher World.

It appears that he pursued this study during his travels in Italy. In a letter dated Naples, 25th March, 1786, I find the following:—"I beg you to tell Herder that I have almost finished my Archetypal Plant (*Urpflanz*,) only I am afraid nobody will

* *Gewohnheit*, consuetudo. *Familiarity* comes the nearest to it, but this, like so many of our words, is vulgarized.

choose to recognise in it the actual vegetable world. My famous Theory of Cotyledons is so sublimated that it would be a hard matter to push it farther."

In May of the same year, in a letter to Herder, he says, "I must moreover tell you in confidence, that I am very near the whole secret of the generation and organization of plants, and that it is the simplest thing that can be imagined. Under this sky one may make the most beautiful observations. The main point—where the germ really lodges—I have discovered beyond all doubt; all the rest I have a general view of, only some points must be more distinctly made out. The Archetypal Plant (*Urpflanz*) will be the strangest creature in the world, which Nature herself shall envy me. With this model, and the key to it, one may then invent plants *ad infinitum*, which *must* be consistent; *i. e.* which if they do not exist, yet might exist, and are not mere picturesque shows and shadows, but have an inward truth and necessity. The same law will be applicable to all animated bodies."

In April, 1788 (*Zweyter Aufenthalt in Rom,*) he writes, "The laws of the organization of plants, which I had detected in Sicily, busied me, in the midst of all these other pursuits, as favourite studies do which take hold in our minds, and seem to lie within our reach. I visited the botanic garden, and collected many curious plants on which to prosecute my observations."

1798.—"I wrote notes on Diderot's Essay on Colours, rather humourous than scientific. * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * *
In what order and division the history of the Theory of Colours should be given, was thought out chronologically (*epochen-weise,*) and the several writers on the subject studied: the theory itself, too, was maturely weighed, and discussed with Schiller. He it was who resolved the doubt which had long hindered me—what was the cause of that strange uncertainty of vision from which some men confound colours. He inferred from it, that they see some colours and do not see others, and at length concluded that they entirely want the perception of blue. A young man of the name of Gildemeister, who was then a student at Jena, had this defect, and very kindly offered himself for all sort of experiments, which at length confirmed us in this result."

1800.—"The investigation of nature went on its quiet course.
* * * * * * * * * * * *
The main divisions of the *Farbenlehre*, under the three great heads, the Didactic, the Polemic, and the Historic, now first became clear and distinct to my mind.

"To make myself perfect in Jussieu's System of Botany, I arranged the plates of several botanical works in that order. I

thence derived a perception (*Anschauung*) of the individual forms, and a general view of the whole, which I could have obtained by no other means."

1801.—Being ill, he says, he was obliged to work with moderation. "I therefore turned myself to the translation of Theophrastus's little book on colours, which I had long had in my mind."

1802.—On his visit to Halle, he says, "With Loder, many anatomical problems formerly observed were discussed. With Himly, a great deal concerning subjective vision, and the appearance of colours. We often lost ourselves so deeply in our subject, that we wandered over hill and dale till far into the night."

1806.—"Cotta's observations on the growth of plants, with specimens of sections of various woods, were a very welcome present. These observations stimulated me to renew those which I had had such a lingering after for so many years, and were the main cause that I resolved to addict myself anew to Morphology, and to print the *Metamorphose per Pflanzen*, and something appended to it.

"The preliminary labours to the *Farbenlehre*, with which I had been occupied during twelve consecutive years, were advanced so far, that the parts began to assume a certain coherence, and the whole promised soon to acquire consistency. What I, after my fashion, could and would do, as to physiological colours, was done. The beginning of the historical part likewise lay ready, and the printing of the first and second parts might therefore be begun. I now turned to the pathological colours, and, with relation to the historical part, investigated what Pliny had said of colours. While the several parts thus went forward, a scheme of the whole science was worked out.

"The physical colours now required arrangement, and my whole attention. The observation of their media, and conditions of appearance, put the whole powers of my mind in requisition. Here I was compelled to express my long-confirmed conviction, that, as we see all colours only through media, and on media, the doctrine of Opakes (*Trüben*) as the purest and most delicate material, was the beginning whence the whole scale of colours must unfold itself.

"Persuaded that in what lay behind me within the circle of physiological colours, this must of necessity come to light without any efforts of mine, I went forwards, and arranged all I had gone through with myself or with others, on refraction. For this was truly the abode of that enchanted princess, who in her seven-coloured garment deceives the world. Here lay the grim sophistical dragon, the terror of all who resolved to undertake the

adventure of a combat with this error. The importance of this point, and of the chapter thereto belonging, was great. I sought to do justice to it by copious investigation, and do not fear having to reproach myself with the neglect of any thing. That when colours appear by refraction, some figure, outline, or boundary line must be displaced, was established. How, in subjective experiments, black and white objects of all sorts, when looked at through the prism, retain their outlines; how the same is the case with regard to gray objects of all shades, and to the bright colours of every variety and shade, according to the greater or less degree of refraction; all this was rigidly examined, and I am convinced that the teacher who shall put all the phenomena to the test of experiment, will find nothing wanting either in the matter or the statement.

"The catoptrical and paroptical colours followed next; and it was in the attempt to observe them that it appeared, that reflection in a mirror produced colours only when the reflecting body was scratched, cracked, or used in threads or strips. In the experiments on the paroptical colours I was led to deny the inclination (curvature?) and to deduce the coloured stripes from double lights. That each of the edges of the sun throws a distinct shadow of its own, was exhibited in a very striking manner by an annular solar eclipse.

"The sensual and moral effect of colours was then examined, and, in the historical department, Gauthier's *Chroagénésie* was read. We had come to the thirteenth sheet of the first part, when, on the 14th of October, the most dreadful calamity fell upon us, and threatened irretrievably to destroy the papers, which were hastily put together for flight.

"Happily, we soon recovered ourselves, and were able to engage in new pursuits, and to resume this, and to go on in our daily work with calm activity.

"Now, above all, were the necessary tables constructed. A continued correspondence with the kind and excellent Runge gave us opportunity to annex his letters at the end of the *Farbenlehre*. Seebeck's series of experiments also came very opportunely to hand. With lightened breast we thanked the Muses for such manifest favour; but scarcely had we taken breath, when we found ourselves compelled to enter upon the odious polemical part of the affair, and to bring our labours on Newton's Optics, as well as the examination of his experiments and the inductions from them, into a narrow compass, and thus to a termination. The introduction to the polemical part began with the year."

1807.—"The long-prepared tables for the *Farbenlehre* were gradually drawn out fair, with great pains and accuracy, and

engraved, while the printing of the text went on, and was finished in the end of January. Now, I could turn with more freedom to the polemical part. As Newton had come at an inconclusive result by connecting different instruments and contrivances, the phenomena which arise when prisms and lenses operate on each other were investigated, and the Newtonian experiments accurately examined, one after the other. The beginning of the polemical part was thus ready for press. The historical was kept steadily in view. Nuguet on colours, in the *Journal de Trévoux*, was most welcome. I went back, too, to the middle ages; Roger Bacon was taken up again, and, as a preparatory work, I wrote the Scheme of the Fifteenth Century.

"Friend Meyer* studied the colouring of the ancients, and began an essay upon it. The merits of these never enough to be valued fathers of art, were faithfully represented in all their purity and nature. An introduction to the *Farbenlehre*, and a preface, were written; a zealous friend also attempted a translation into French, the pages of which, still in my possession, recall to me the most delightful hours. Mean while, the polemical part was continued, and the printed sheets of both parts corrected. At the end of the year, there were thirty sheets of the first, and five of the second part, in my hands.

"When we have been long occupied with a subject, and it is become so familiar to us and so much our own that it floats before our minds on every occasion, we come to use it by way of comparison or illustration, both in jest and in earnest; this I experienced, in some pleasant instances, with cheerful friends, in our literary intercommunications.

"The polemical, as well as the historical part of the Theory of Colours goes on slowly, but regularly. Of historical studies, Roger Bacon, Aquilonius, and Boyle, are the chief remaining. At the end of the year, the first part is nearly finished.

1809.—"At Jena, I worked upon the History of the Theory of Colours; went over the 15th and 16th centuries, and wrote the history of my own chromatic conversation and continued researches. I laid this work by in May, and did not resume it till the end of the year, when Runge's *Farbenkugel* (colour-sphere?) set my chromatic observations in motion again. I then brought the history down to the 18th century, and the printing of the second part went on uninterruptedly. My attention was next directed to the controversy with Newton.

1810.—"A remarkable year, diversified by activity, enjoyment, and acquisition. The whole is so superabundant, that I feel myself in perplexity how to arrange the parts in due order.

* See Note 8.

"Before all things, however, science deserves mention. In this respect, the beginning of the year was tiresome enough; I had got so far with the printing of the *Farbenlehre*, that the completion of it before Easter seemed not impossible. I finished the polemical part, as well as the history of the 18th century; the tables engraved after my careful drawings, were coloured; the recapitulation of the whole concluded, and the departure of the last sheet for the printing office was seen with delight.

"This took place just eighteen years after the first perception of a long-cherished error, after a course of unwearied labours; and after the discovery, at length, of the point around which all must congregate. The burden I had hitherto borne was so great, that I looked upon the 16th of May, on which I seated myself in the carriage on my way to Bohemia, as a happy day of liberation.

"As to the effect, I troubled myself little; and I did well. For such a perfect want of sympathy, and repulsive unfriendliness, however, I was not prepared. I say nothing about it, and rather prefer to mention how much I was indebted, in this and in all my other scientific and literary labours, to Dr. F. W. Riemer, many years companion of my house, my travels, and my studies.

"But as, when one is once accustomed to toil and trouble, one is ever ready and willing to take up fresh burdens; on looking over the scheme of the *Farbenlehre*, the kindred idea suggested itself whether the science of sounds might not be treated in a similar manner; and gave birth to a table, in which Subject, Object, and Medium were arranged in three columns.

"And as none of our mental powers can easily deviate from the track which we have once fallen into, be it the true or the false one, this same mode of presenting a thing to the mind was applied to the whole of physics: the Subject, with full consideration of its organs of apprehension and perception; the Object, as something perceptible; the Phenomenon (*Erscheinung*—appearance,) repeated and varied by experiment, in the centre; whence a completely new mode of investigation was devised.

"Experiment, as proof of any subjective opinion, was rejected. There exist what have long been called questions in nature. And as all discovery may be regarded as a wise answer to a prudent question,* one may at every stop convince oneself whether or not one is on the right road, when one sees every where, whether in the Particular or the Universal, nothing but gain on one's side."

* Lord Bacon says, "A prudent questioning is a kind of half knowledge.—*Transl.*

1812.—"Dr. Seebeck, following his chromatic investigations with his usual industry, occupied himself with the second Newtonian experiment, which I had only touched upon as much as was absolutely necessary in the polemical part of my work. He worked at it in my presence, and arrived at some important results; for that theory, as soon as you proceed from the use of the prism to that of lenses, becomes entangled in inextricable difficulties.

1814.—"In the *Farbenlehre* something was progressively done. The entoptic colours remain a constant object of attention. The meeting with Dr. Seebeck, at Frankfurt, was a great advantage; for, independent of his general and comprehensive knowledge, he had gone to the bottom of the theory of the double spar, and knew how to bring before the eyes of inquirers the relation of the axis of such refracting bodies.

"The theory of sounds was compared with that of colours. Professor Voigt pursued his observation, particularly on the colours of organic bodies; and over all my researches into natural history, floated Howard's Theory of Clouds."

1816.—"Professor Pfaff sent me his attack on my *Farbenlehre*, according to the uncivil intrusiveness in fashion among German authors. I laid it aside till some future day, when my own mind may be fully made up. To follow one's own way must ever be the safest plan; for this always has the peculiar advantage of always leading us back from all our errors to ourselves.

"Dr. Schopenhauer came to my side as a friend and well-wisher. We discussed many things, and were generally agreed. * * Experiments on colours with vegetable extracts, served repeatedly to show the great consistency (consequentiality) of the theory of colours."

1817.—"I worked with great zeal at the second part of the Morphology, and made historical observations on the influence of the Kantian doctrines on my studies. * * * * *

"My chromatic pursuits occupied me in silence. I endeavoured to make myself acquainted with what had been done on the subject in England, France, and Germany. I studied four English authors of distinguished reputation, and sought to make their works, and ways of thinking, clear and distinct to my own mind; these were Bancroft, Sowerby, Reid, and Brewster. On the one side I remarked, with pleasure, that they, by pure observation of phenomena, had approached the course indicated by nature, and, indeed, had sometimes touched it; on the other I saw, with regret, that they could not entirely free themselves from the dominion of the old error,—that colour is contained in light; that they made use of the established terminology; and thence fell into the greatest confusion and intricacy. Brewster especially,

too, seemed to think that the thing was advanced by an endless series of experiments; whereas, numerous and accurate experiments are only the preliminary labours of the true investigator of nature, to enable him to arrive, at length, at a result freed from all subordinate or collateral matters.

"The most offensive thing to me, however, that ever came under my notice, was Biot's chapter on the entoptic colours, called by him the Polarization of light. By taking a false analogy—that of a magnetic needle—he had distorted light into two poles, and thus (no less than had formerly been done) had sought to explain colours by differentializing the Unchangeable and Untouchable. Then, to bolster up a false dogma with proofs, the whole armoury of mathematics was put in requisition, so that nature wholly and utterly vanished from both the outward and inward sense. I could only look upon the whole business as a pathological *case;* it was as if a splinter had been forced into some organized body, and an unskilful surgeon, instead of instantly extracting it, had bestowed his whole care upon the swelling, and had endeavoured to sooth and reduce that, while the cause of the evil was internally working incurable mischief.

"And thus it was quite dreadful to me, when an academical teacher, with incredible coolness and confidence, spread forth the most inconclusive, inapplicable apparatus before eminent and discriminating persons; and after looking and re-looking, blinking with one eye and then with the other, no body knew either what he had seen, or what he ought to see. I had risen and left the room at the first display, and heard the result of these *demonstrations* at my return without the least surprise. The audience had the good fortune to learn, too, on this occasion, by the example of two billiard balls, that the globules of light, when they come in contact with glass, at the poles, go through and through; but when they come upon it at the equator, are sent back again with a flee in their ear.

"Mean while, the entoptic experiments multiplied to infinity, since I had at last to discover the simple atmospheric origin. * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"Leonordo da Vinci's essay on the causes of the blueness of distant mountains, and other objects, gave me renewed pleasure. He hit upon the right, because he understood nature from immediate inspection, and reflected on the appearances themselves, with the perspicacity of a true Artist. I had also the sympathy of some observing and thinking men. Staatsrath Schultz, of Berlin, sent me his second paper on physiological colours, where I saw my leading idea brought into life and action. Nor was I less satisfied with Professor Hegel's approbation. Since Schiller's death, I had silently withdrawn myself from all philosophy, and

only sought to bring that Method (*Methodik*) which was native to me, to greater certainly and readiness, by the application of it to Nature, Art, and Life. It must, therefore, be very gratifying to me to see and reflect how what I had submitted, after *my* fashion, was received and handled by a philosopher, according to *his* kind of knowledge. And here it was perfectly granted me, to consider the mysterious, clear Light as the highest energy; eternal, sole, and indivisible.

1818.—"At the same time, the chapter of entoptic colours was in the order of the day. Brewster's experiments for communicating to glass the regular appearance of colours by reflection, by means of pressure, which had been usually produced by means of heat, succeeded perfectly; and I, for my part, persuaded of the co-operation of the Techno mechanic with the Dynamo-ideal, had Seebeck's cross embroidered like damask, and could now see it in whatever light I chose, clear or dim, on a uniform surface."

1820.—"The entoptic colours gave me fresh zeal for working at the theory of colours. I had concluded my essay, with great care, in the August of this year, and sent it to press. The order I had followed in my *Farbenlehre* was observed here also. The entoptic apparatus was farther simplified. Laminæ of mica and gypsum were used in experiments, and their effects carefully compared. I had the good luck to go through this matter, once, more, with Staatsrath Schultz, and immediately set myself upon various paralipomena of the theory of colours.

"Purkinje on Vision was taken in hand, and the adversaries of my doctrines arranged chronologically. My attention was directed, by some of my friends, to the *Nouvelle Chroagénésie, par le Prince*, which might be regarded as the effect and corroboration of my *Farbenlehre*. On examination, however, I found an important difference. The author had come upon the track of Newton's error, in the same way that I had; but he advanced neither himself nor others, since he, like Dr. Reid, wanted to establish something equally untenable in the place of it. This gave me occasion to remark, once more, how a man who has been struck and enlightened by a ray of light, can fall back again so quickly into the darkness of his *individuum*, in which he then tries to grope his way by the miserable help of a farthing rushlight.

"A great many observations on the march of science—on its advance, retardation, nay, even retrogradation, were made. The mutual relation of all physical phenomena, ever coming more to light, yet still veiled in mystery, was modestly examined into; till, all at once, the discovery of the relation between galvanism and magnetism, by Professor Oerstadt, burst upon us with an almost dazzling light. On the other hand, I regarded with hor-

ror an instance of the most terrible *obscurantism*, in studying more nearly Biot's works on the polarization of light. One really grows ill over such an attempt. Such theories, proofs, and details, are real Nekroses, against which the most vigorous organization cannot stand."

1821.—"I now turn to the natural sciences; and must remark, in the first place, that Purkinje's work on subjective Sight peculiarly excited me. I wrote notes, and, with the view of making use of it in my essays, had the tables which are annexed copied. As the whole theory of colours rests on a precise idea of Opakes (*Trüben*)—since it is by them that we arrive at the perception of the primitive phenomenon—and since, by a careful and able development of it, we find the whole visible world made clear to us, it was worth while to look around, how various nations had expressed themselves on this subject; from what point they set out, and how they made use of nearer or more remote, ruder or more delicate, analogies. I tried to get possession of some Vienna drinking glasses, on which an opake enamel, or glazing, exhibited the phenomenon more beautifully than I had seen it in any other way.

"Much chromatic matter was looked out of former papers, for my fourth number. Bernardinus Telesius was studied generally, and particularly the part on colours. Seebeck's lecture on the warmth of prismatic figures of the sun (?) (*Sonnenbilde*) was most welcome; and my own ealier observations on these remarkable facts were revealed. Hofmechanicus Körner busied himself with an attempt to make flint glass, and erected an instrument in his workshop, for the so-called polarization experiments, on the French plan. The results were, as I had long ago convinced myself they would be, slender enough. It was singular, that, just at the same time, a feud broke out between Biot and Arago, by which the nullity of this theory was made sufficiently evident to all men of science.

"In my chromatic studies, I had a great acquisition; for, at length, there appeared a hope that a younger man would take upon himself the duty of carrying and fighting through this important matter. Herr von Henning visited me, and brought admirably prepared entoptic glasses and black mirrors, which, combined, bring before the eye all the most important phenomena, with little trouble or preparation. Our conversation was easy; he had gone thoroughly into the subject; and some questions on which he was still in doubt, I could answer. He told me how he had treated it in his lectures, the introduction to which he had already communicated to me. We interchanged our views and experiments; I gave him an old essay of mine on prisms in connexion with lenses, which had hitherto been employed to a

false end; and he, in return, urged me to put my chromatic papers into more perfect and available order. This all happened in autumn, and gave me no little tranquillity.

"An entoptic apparatus was fitted up, and sent to Berlin; the simple entoptic glasses, with black glass mirrors, had put us upon a new course, had increased our discoveries, enlarged our views, and given occasion to observe the entoptic quality of melting ice."

I have, I believe, picked out nearly every sentence relating to these two works of Goethe's, particularly the *Fabenlehre*, from his *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte;* a little book, which seems to me singularly interesting, instructive, and characteristic, and which I should feel myself most usefully employed in translating, if I had any expectation that the public would judge it as I do. The calm observation, the indulgent judgement, the unwearied industry, the wonderful many-sidedness, the resolution to use and to enjoy life to the utmost, which are evident in every page of these annals of his mind and works, afford a most beautiful study, rich in lessons of utility and happiness.

The book is full of entertaining matter; and it may appear strange that I have selected just the part which is least interesting to myself—to which, in my total ignorance of physical science, I could least do justice, and which will least amuse the "general reader." But I thought *this* view of the mental activity of the author of Werther, Iphigenia, and Faust, quite worth the notice of every one who desires to understand Goethe. Allowance must be made for defects of translation, on a subject of which I know nothing. The *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte* is a sort of *Biographia Literaria;* poetry, painting, music,—geology, and other physical sciences,—pass in review before the author, and are pursued with the ardour and perseverance of which I have given one example.

The observations on cotemporary literature, persons, and events are most amusing and instructive. The description of Madame de Stael's visit to Weimar, of his own visit to Carlsbad, may be mentioned as peculiarly entertaining. The remarks on the characters of others are full of acuteness, yet always calm, and generally leaning to the favourable side. The insight afforded into his own, is wonderfully interesting; sometimes designed, sometimes unconscious; and, to conclude all, the picture of the life of a man of letters, in one of the "despotic" states of Germany, is fitted to excite some reflections not altogether favourable to "popular institutions," in those who live in a country where government and people are too much occupied in scrambling for supremacy, to care about arts or letters.

It will be observed that in recording his proceedings, Goethe frequently uses either the first person plural, or the impersonal form of speech. In the original this is much more frequent than I found it expedient to adopt. I have retained it where I could, without ambiguity or awkwardness, as I endeavour to do whatever is characteristic in his style.

Some remarks on the two works which form the subject of this Note will be found in an interesting article on Goethe, which has lately appeared in the *Bibliothèque Universelle* of Geneva, and of which I have been glad to avail myself in a latter part of my work. It is said to be written by a young Genevese, who is now tutor to the young Princes of Weimar.

Note 5.

Johann Heinrich Voss was born in 1751, in a village of Mecklenburg, where his father was a farmer. He afterwards removed to Penzlin, where Johann was educated till his fourteenth year. As a child, he was remarkable for strength of memory, universal curiosity, and an enthusiastic tendency to self-observation. He was of a delicate constitution, and his amusements were the Bible, and popular tales and ballads. In 1766, he went to school in New Brandenburgh, and, having already taught himself some Greek and Hebrew, entered the highest class. Greek being neglected, Voss secretly formed a class of twelve of the head boys, who met to repair this defect by their private exertions. Fines were exacted for negligence, and these went to the purchase of a common stock of German classics. Here he already began to write verses. His father's circumstances, however, growing more and more straitened, young Voss entered the family of a country gentleman, near Penzlin, as private tutor. After teaching five or six hours a day, his recreations were the study of the ancient languages, music, and solitary walks in the neighbouring wood, where he used to declaim aloud, passages from Horace Rammler, and other poets; and where he made his translation of Hesiod's Theogony. He became acquainted with Brückner and Boie, by the latter of whom he was induced to go to Göttingen, where Boie, had obtained for him commons (*freitisch*) for two years, and hoped to get him private pupils and free instruction (*freies callegium.*) Here he became one of that band of distinguished youths, at the head of which were Boie and and Bürger. Voss determined to enter the church; and the first

courses he attended were, consequently, logic, history, and dogmatic theology (*die Dogmatik*,) and the Psalms. He, however, abandoned theology, and devoted himself exclusively to Greek and Latin literature. He now entered Heyne's philological seminary; besides which, he attended his lectures on the last books of the Iliad, and some private lectures, especially on Pindar. He however, quarrelled with Heyne, and quitted Göttingen. He translated Blaçkwell's work on Homer; and in 1775 retired to Wandsbeck, to conduct the Göttingen *Musen Almanack*, in the quiet of the country. In 1778, through the interest of Büsch, he became rector* at Otterndorf in Hadeln, where he became acquainted with another remarkable instance of vigorous self-education, Carsten Niebuhr, the traveller, father of the illustrious and lamented historian.† Here he published his translation of the Odyssey. Incessant marsh fever drove him from Otterndorf, and he went as rector to Eutin. In 1793 he published his Iliad and Odyssey; and in 1801 his beautiful poem, *Luise*. We pass over the mention of numerous less celebrated works. In 1805, the Grand Duke of Baden invited him to Heidelberg, to assist in restoring the University. Here he died, on the 30th of March 1826, strengthened and tranquillized by domestic patriarchal repose, and the consciousness of having ever willed the Good, the True, the Right. In reviewing his life, it is impossible to deny that, through his whole career, as poet and philologist, as teacher and friend, he toiled, nay, combated, for truth and justice, for the universal ennobling of his species: we find, in him, a thorough German character, amiable in social intercourse, patriarchal, simple, and friendly; his faults were, vanity, pertinacity of opinion, and contentiousness. As philologist, he had a most intimate acquaintance with the ancients, both with their lives and language, and his services to the German language and metre are beyond all praise. As translator of the poets of antiquity, he unquestionably holds the highest place; and it is delightful to observe with what intense perseverance, with what conscientious strictness, with what metrical art, he strove after pre-excellence in this line. The Homer, and the Eclogues of Virgil, are his best works. Horace, Aristophanes, and Shakspeare, are far less successful. Some of his earlier songs and idyls are very beautiful. Of the latter, the *Luise* is incomparably the most celebrated, and is a wonderful adaptation of the tone of Theocritus, and sometimes of Homer, to genuine German domestic life.

An account of Voss will be found in Mr. William Taylor's Survey of German Poetry, vol. ii. I have, however, extracted the

* Not a clerical office.

† See Carsten Niebuhr's Life, by his son.

foregoing from the Conversations Lexicon, as it appeared necessary to the understanding of the beautiful exposition of the life and works of a Poet which follows. This is to be found in the volume of Goethe's *Recensionen.* I have little fear of presenting my readers with what is already familiar to them, for I have met with accomplished Germans, admirers of Goethe, who had never seen it, and who were as much struck as I had been by its beauty. A volume of the best specimens of German criticism would be a valuable addition to English literature. In them is kept in view the proper end and province of criticism—the *instruction* of the author and of the public. The following, however, is rather an analysis of the character of the Poet than of the Poems.

REVIEW of Voss's POEMS: extracted from Vol. xxxiii. of Goethe's Works, last edition, 1830.

Lyrical Poems of Johann Henrich Voss. 1802. *First Volume. Odes and Elegies, &c.*

"Looking at the index of poems prefixed to each volume, we find the odes and elegies of the first volume, as well as the odes and songs of the three following, and all the other small poems, arranged according to the date of their composition.

"Such a compilation and mode of arrangement generally, and and in this case particularly, bespeaks a tranquil, consistent, gradually pursued progress in mental culture, and gives us a presentiment, that, in this collection, more clearly perhaps than in any other, the life, the walk, and conversation of the poet are pictured out.

"Every author, in some degree, pourtrays himself in his works, even be it against his will. In this case, he is present to us, and designedly; nay, with a friendly alacrity, sets before us his inward and outward modes of thinking and feeling; and disdains not to give us confidential explanations of circumstances, thoughts, views, and expressions, by means of appended notes.

"And now, encouraged by so friendly an invitation, we draw nearer to him; we seek him by himself; we attach ourselves to him, and promise ourselves rich enjoyment, and manifold instruction and improvement.

"In a level northern landscape, we find him, rejoicing in his existence, in a latitude in which the ancients hardly expected to find a living thing.

"And truly, Winter there manifests his whole might and sovereignty. Storm-borne from the Pole, he covers the wood with hoar frost, the streams with ice;—a drifting whirlwind eddies around the high gables, while the poet rejoices in the shelter and

comfort of his home, and cheerily bids defiance to the raging elements. Furred and and frost-covered friends arrive, and are heartily welcomed under the protecting roof; and soon they form a cordial, confiding circle, enliven the household meal by the clang of glasses, the joyous song, and thus create for themselves a moral summer.

"We then find him abroad, and braving the inclemencies of the wintry heavens. When the axle-tree creeks heavily under the load of fire-wood—when even the footsteps of the wanderer ring along the ground—we see him now walking briskly through the snow to the distant dwelling of a friend; now joining a sledge-party, gliding, with tinkling bells, over the boundless plain. At length a cheerful inn receives the half-frozen travellers; a bright flickering fire greets them as they crowd around the chimney; dance, choral song, and many a warm viand, are reviving and grateful to youth and age. But when the snow melts under the returning sun, when the warmed earth frees itself somewhat from its thick covering, the poet hastens with his friends into the free air, to refresh himself with the first living breath of the new year, and to seek the earliest flowers. The bright golden clover is gathered, bound into bunches, and brought home in triumph, where this herald of the future beauty and bounty of the year is destined to crown a family festival of Hope.

"And when Spring herself advances, no more is heard of roof and hearth; the poet is always abroad, wandering on the soft pathways around his peaceful lake. Every bush unfolds itself with an individual character, every blossom bursts with an individual life, in his presence. As in a fully worked-out picture, we see, in the sun-light around him, grass and herb, as distinctly as oak and beech-tree; and on the margin of the still waters there is wanting neither the reed nor any succulent plant.

"Here his companions are not those transforming fantasies, by whose impatient power the rock fashions itself into the divine maiden, the tree puts off its branches and appears to allure the hunter with its soft, lovely arms. Rather wanders the poet solitary, like a priest of nature; touches each plant, each bush, with gentle hand; and hallows them members of a loving, harmonious family.

"Around him, like a dweller in Eden, sport harmless, fearless creatures—the lamb on the meadows, the roe in the forrest. Around him, assemble the whole choir of birds, and drown the busy hum of day with their varied accents.

"Then, at evening, towards night, when the moon climbs the heaven in serene splendour, and sends her flickering image curling to his feet on the surface of the lightly ruffled waters; when the boat rocks softly, and the oar gives its measured cadence, and

every stroke calls up sparkles of reflected light; when the nightingale pours forth her divine song from the shore, and softens every heart; then do affection and passion manifest themselves in happy tenderness; from the first touch of a sympathy awakened by the Highest himself, to that quiet, graceful, timid desire, which flourishes within the narrow enclosure of domestic life. A heaving breast, an ardent glance, a pressure of the hand, a stolen kiss, give life to his song. But it is ever the affianced lover that is emboldened; it is ever the betrothed bride that yields; and thus does all that is ventured, and all that is granted, bend to a lawful standard; though within that limit, he permits himself much freedom.

"Soon however he leads us again under the free heavens; into the green; to bower and bush; and there is he most cheerfully, cordially, and fondly at home.

"The Summer has come again; a genial warmth breathes through the poet's song. Thunders roll; clouds drop showers; rainbows appear; lightnings gleam; and a blessed coolness overspreads the plain. Every thing ripens; the poet overlooks none of the varied harvests; he hallows all by his presence.

"And here is the place to remark what an influence our poets might exercise on the civilization of our German people—in some places, perhaps, have exercised.

"His poems on the various incidents of rural life, indeed, do represent rather the reflections of a refined intellect than the feelings of the common people; but if we could picture to ourselves that a harper were present at the hay, corn, and potatoe harvests,—if we recollected how he might make the men whom he gathered around him observant of that which recurs to them as ordinary and familiar; if, by his manner of regarding it, by his poetical expression, he elevated the common, and heightened the enjoyment of every gift of God and nature by his dignified representation of it, we may truly say he would be a real benefactor to his country. For the first stage of a true enlightment is, that man should reflect upon his condition and circumstances, and be brought to regard them in the most agreeable light. Let the song of the potatoe be sung in the field, where the wondrous mode of increase, which calls even the man of science to high and curious meditation, after the long and silent working and interweaving of vegetable powers, comes to view, and a quite unintelligible blessing springs out of the earth; and then first will be felt the merit of this and similar poems, in which the poet essays to awaken the rude, reckless, unobservant man, who takes every thing for granted, to an attentive observation of the high wonders of all-nourishing Nature, by which he is constantly surrounded.

"But scarcely are all these bounties brought under man's no-

tice, when Autumn glides in, and our poet takes an affecting leave of nature, decaying, at least in outward appearance. Yet he abandons, not his beloved vegetation wholly to the unkind winter. The elegant vase receives many a plant, many a bulb, wherewith to create a mimic summer in the home seclusion of winter, and, even at that season, to leave no festival without its flowers and wreaths. Care is taken that even the household birds belonging to the family should not want a green, fresh roof to their bowery cage.

"Now is the loveliest time for short rambles,—for friendly converse in the chilly evening. Every domestic feeling becomes active; longings for social pleasures increase; the want of music is more sensibly felt; and now, even the sick man willingly joins the friendly circle, and a departing friend seems to clothe himself in the colours of the departing year.

"For, as certainly as spring will return after the lapse of winter, so certainly will friends, lovers, kindred, meet again; they will meet again in the presence of the all-loving Father; and then first will they form a Whole with each other, and with every thing good, after which they sought and strove in vain in this piece-meal world. And thus does the felicity of the poet, even here, rest on the persuasion that all have to rejoice in the care of a wise God, whose power extends unto all, and whose light lightens upon all. Thus does the adoration of such a Being create in the poet the highest clearness and reasonableness; and, at the same time, an assurance that the thoughts, the words, with which he comprehends and describes infinite qualities, are not empty dreams and sounds; and thence arises a rapturous feeling of his own and others' happiness, in which every thing conflicting, peculiar, discordant, is resolved and dissipated.

"Thus far we have seen the gentle, serene, collected nature of our poet, in peace with himself, with God, and with the world; but may not even this self-dependence, from whose inner circles expands so cheerful an existence, be frequently troubled, perplexed, and excited to passionate emotion from without? These questions, also, may be fully answered from the poems before us.

"The conviction of having by his own proper strength and steadfast will, raised himself out of cramping circumstances, and educated himself out of himself; of owing his merits to himself alone; of being able to gain and to increase these advantages solely by an unfettered aspiration of the mind, enhances the natural feeling of independence, which, constantly heightened by abstraction from the world, must receive many a check, many a wound, from the inevitable intercourses of life.

"When, therefore, the poet is compelled to remark that so many members of the higher classes neglect the great privileges and

invaluable facilities their birth affords them, and that ill-breeding, coarseness, and want of cultivation prevail among them, he cannot pardon such disgraceful recklessness. And if, moreover, they look down upon true merit with all the arrogance of ignorance and stupidity, he draws back in disgust, and secludes himself even from the cheerful repast and the convivial circle, where frank humanity and kindness stream from heart to heart, and common enjoyment ought to knit the most delghtful bond of union.

"With holy, solemn earnestness, he contrasts true merit with false; now chastises exclusive prejudice and ignorance with ridicule, now seeks to correct error by love.

"But where the advantages of birth are enhanced by intrinsic worth, he greets them with sincere respect, and wins to himself the most valuable friends.

"He takes a transient part in that poetical enthusiasm for freedom which was awakened and maintained in Germany during the enjoyment of a ten years' peace. Many a well disposed youth, who carried the feeling of academic independence into life and art, found, in the restraints of civil administration, so much that was oppressive and unequal, that he held it to be a duty to speculate on the establishment of justice and freedom, generally, if not with particular applications. The country was threatened by no enemies from without, but they were thought to exist at home; on this or that seat of justice, in the cabinet, in the court; and as Klopstock, by the introduction of the chorus of bards into the sacred oaken grove, had given to the German fancy a sort of country and station, as he had beaten the Romans once more by the aid of song, it was natural that, among our youth, bards, called and uncalled, should arise, and, for a time, court the Muse, well or ill, as might happen.

"And we must not be displeased with our poet, whose pure love of country was afterwards so actively, nobly, and variously displayed, if he too occasionally coloured the Rhine with the blood of tyrants, in order to break the slavish bond of reality.

"But his leaning to French notions of liberty was neither violent nor of long continuance. Soon was our poet repelled by the results of the unfortunate experiment, and he returned, unharmed, to the bosom of moral and civil liberty.

"This disappointment of his hopes frequently gave a colour even to his criticisms on art; especially, he expressed himself with vehemence, it may be said with harshness, as to those various, irregular, indeterminate attempts, by which German poetry fell, for a while, into confusion. Here he did not appear sufficiently to discriminate, but to visit all with equal condemnation, although, out of this very chaotic struggle, many things worthy of praise

arose. Yet it must be acknowledged that such passages and poems are comparatively rare, and, without a key, scarcely intelligible; for which reason, we must accede to the general justice of our poet's judgments. That so sensitive, retired, and unworldly a nature, should be by no means adequately stimulated, encouraged, and strengthened to cheerful activity, may be readily presumed. But who can say that such a lot has fallen to him? And thus we find, in many of his earlier poems, touches of a certain dissatisfaction and disquietude, which unconsciously break forth, even through the joyous sound of the catch (*rundgesang*,) and through the cheerful glow of friendship and of love; and in passages of many an admirable poem, jarringly break the general sympathy. And no less do we observe songs written at a later period, in which gentle murmurs tell of impeded efforts, of stinted growth, of troubled production, of vexations of various kinds; and portions of life are bewailed as lost. Then, however, he arouses himself, with might and main, fights obstinately, as for his very existence; then he spares no vehemence of language, no weight of invective, when that bright fredom of spirit which he has attained to, that serene glance over the universe, and its moral arrangement which beams forth from the peace within, when the child-like love for Him who guides and governs all, is any sort darkened, hindered, troubled. If others *will* rob the poet of this feeling of universal, holy complacency; if they *will* set up a peculiar doctrine, an exclusive interpretation, a contracted and contracting principle,—then is his mind moved, even to passion; then does the peaceful man rise up, grasp his weapon, and go forth against errors which he thinks so fearfully pernicious; against credulity and superstition; against phantoms arising out of the obscure depths of nature, and of the human mind; against reason-obscuring, intellect-contracting dogmas; against decrees and anathemas; against proclaimers of heresy priests of Baal, hierarchies, clerical hosts, and against their great common progenitor, the Devil himself.

"But ought we to blame such feelings in a man, whose whole mind is penetrated with the conviction, that he, in common with many others, owes the true happiness of his existence to that clear light, which, some centuries ago, diffused itself over the north,—not without the greatest sacrifices on the part of its followers and propagators?

"Ought we to accede to the apparently fair, but radically false and unfair maxim, which, impudently enough declares that true toleration must be tolerant, even towards intolerance? By no means; intollerance is ever active and stirring, and can only be maintained by intolerant deeds and practices.

"Yes; we fully understand the intense vexation and regret of the poet, when, menaced on another side by these gloomy influ-

ences, they threaten to rob him of a friend—a friend in the fullest sense of the word. If our poet himself, as we have seen, clings so fondly to objects which cannot even return his affection, how must he attach himself to the Sympathizing—to men;—to those like himself;—to noble and high natures; and count them among his dearest and richest treasures!

"His mind and his heart early seek enlightened and light-seeking men. Already do the forms of Hagedorn and Kleist,* the first removed and equally revered fathers of German poetry, hover in their æsthetic abodes; to them is turned the glance of their youthful successor; their names are celebrated in pious hymns. Nor less do we see the eminent and accomplished living masters and critics, Klopstock, Lessing, Gleim, Gerstenberg, Bodmer, Rammler, honoured by their new competitor, in the lofty consciousness of his own powers, with manly self-estimation and dignified modesty. Already we find the names of Stolberg, Bürger, Boie, Miller, Hölty, bearing friendly testimony to the value of the fame which their country is soon to confer upon them.

In the midst of this loved and honoured band, in which time made but few and inconsiderable chasms, the poet passed his life. He was even so happy as to interweave the early threads of his academic youth through the whole texture of his future life, by friendship, love, relationship, marriage, by unvarying sympathy, by travelling, visits, and letters.

"How, then, must it pain one so amiable, and so favoured by fortune, when not death but failing affection,—when back-sliding into that old soul-enthralling state which our fathers combated with all their might, threatens for ever to sever him from one of his dearest friends! Here his mortification knows no measure; the grief which he feels at so melancholy a breaking-up of his delightful circle is boundless. Nor, indeed, would he know how to rise above this sorrow, did not the Muse here, too, grant him the inestimable power of venting the feelings which oppressed him to the bosom in a sympathizing friend, in a powerful harmonious stream. If we now return from our poet's expression of his general or individual feelings to his descriptive talent, we shall find much to observe.

"A style of poetry devoted peculiarly to nature, I may say, to reality, has its rise at that point where the otherwise unpoetical man endeavours to confer a peculiar value on what he possesses,—on what immediately surrounds him. That agreeable form of selfishness when the produce of our own land is the sweetest to us, when we think we can offer our friends no feast so dainty as the fruit which grows in our own garden, is of itself a sort of poetry,

* Ewald Christian von Kleist, who died in 1759, of wounds received at the battle of Kunnersdorf.

which genius and art do but cultivate and polish. They lend to what is the poet's own, not only the peculiar value of partiality, the *pretium affectionis*, but invest it with a universal one, an impressive dignity; and thus does the poet make all that is his the property of his cotemporaries, of the world, and of posterity.

"A deep-feeling, energetic nature produces this talismanic effect by true insight, by affectionate perseverance, by minute detail, by the handling of every circumstance as a Whole in itself; and thus satisfies the indispensable and fundamental necessity for internal keeping; but that is not all; outward means are also required to form a graceful structure out of these materials. These are, language and rhythm. And here it is that our poet gives the highest proofs of his mastery.

"For the zealous study of language, the Low German appears to possess peculiar opportunities. Cut off from every thing ungerman, he hears around him only a soft, agreeable, primitive German; and his neighbours speak kindred languages. And when he approaches the sea, when foreign mariners arrive, the radical syllables of his dialect strike upon his ear, and he receives back from stranger lips much of his own native tongue that had perhaps fallen into disuse with him; and thus accustoms himself to mark the derivation and kindred of words in the intercourses of life, more than can be done by the High German, who borders on nations of a quite different extraction.

"The first part of philology our poet acquires scientifically. The derivation of a word leads him to the consideration of its meaning; and he thus establishes much that is significant, restores misapplied words to their original station, and, if he proceed with quiet caution and accuracy, he is yet not wanting in the courage to employ a hard and generally-avoided expression, in a suitable place.

"From this thorough and perfect estimate of the value of words, from this determinate use of them, arises a compacted and settled language, which, removed from that of ordinary prose, rises imperceptibly into higher regions, and may therefore be esteemed poetic in itself. Here appear the junctions and combinations of words, the position of them to the greatest advantage, which present themselves to the German writer; and we may affirm that invaluable examples are to be found among them.

"And not alone do we admire the bringing to light of these treasures of a tongue, in the deepest sense of the word, noble; but also what the poet, by his high endeavours, and by adherence to the strictest rules, has done for the rhythmus of the language. He was not satisfied with that substantial purity of expression, in which every word is rightly chosen, and not one admits a collateral or ambiguous idea, but denotes its subject, singly and pre-

cisely. He requires, for perfection, harmony of sound, graceful and varied structure of the sentence, as it naturally fashions itself in the cultivated mind for the expression of a subject, a sentiment, in a manner perfectly appropriate, and at the same time attractively elegant.

"And here we recognise the eternal service he rendered to German rhythmus, which he raised out of a state of confusion and uncertainty, to the steadiness and determinateness so desirable for the artist. He listened with attentive ear to the high-sounding cadence of Greek antiquity, and, in his hands, the German tongue acquired an equal harmony." In this way did the secret of syllabic measure unfold itself to him; thus did he find the most intimate union between poetry and music; and, under the influence of the friendly society of Schultz, he was enabled theoretically and practically to communicate to his country the fruits of their common efforts.

"Peculiarly agreeable is the study of those poems which, from their form, present themselves as imitations of the remains of antiquity. It is instructive to observe how the poet proceeds. It is not merely a similar body, laboriously re-constructed; it is rather the same spirit appearing once more to give birth to the same form.

"And as the poet is deeply convinced of the value of a determinate and perfect form, of which he has now obtained complete mastery, he turns these newly recognised demands against his own earlier poems, and corrects and finishes them according to the laws of his late matured perfection.

"Grammarians and technicians are bound especially to acknowledge these his efforts: it only remains for us to add a few touches to the task we undertook; *i. e.* to discover the poet from his song, the song from the poet.

"Within the compass of these four volumes we find how he gradually formed himself to be so admirable a translator of the works of antiquity.

"By the decisive victory of form over matter, which we have praised above, by many poems entirely independent of foreign suggestion, the poet shows us that he has it perfectly in his power to quit the actual and ascend into the possible; to reject the near and to seize the distant; to renounce the proper and to appropriate the foreign. And as men wont to say that beside the Roman people, a people of statues ennobled the city, so may it equally be said of our poet, that in him a perfectly antique intellectual world is associated to a genuine German practical existence.

"It was his good fortune to devote his youth to the ancient.

tongues and literature; to choose them as the business of his life. Not piecemeal, alphabetical knowledge was his aim; he pressed on, even to actual insight, to immediate comprehension, of the past in its truest relations; he made the remote present to him, and happily seized the childlike mind with which the earliest civilized nations figured to themselves, with circumscribed fancies, their vast abode the earth, the over-arching heaven, the hidden Tartarus; he saw and felt how it was that they peopled these regions of space with gods, demi-gods, and wondrous forms; how they assigned to each a place for his dwelling, a path for his wandering. Moreover, attentive to the progress of the human mind, which ceased not to observe, to conclude, to create, the inquirer caused the more perfect conception which we moderns possess of the structure of the universe, and of the earth, as well of its inhabitants, gradually to unfold and mature itself before him. How much fable and history are thereby advanced is no longer hidden from any; and his merit will ever appear the more striking, the more this method obtains on every side, and the more what is collected can be arranged and displayed according to its laws.

"Such are the grounds on which are founded his high claim to attach himself to the eldest of bards, to receive from him poetical consecration, to accompany him in all his wanderings, that he might return back among his countrymen, strengthened and elevated. Thus, without the least renunciation of the peculiar and characteristic in himself, did he know how to value what was peculiar and characteristic in every century, in every people, in every poet; and he presented to us the works of antiquity with so practised and masterly a hand, that foreign nations will be constrained henceforward to regard the German tongue with admiration, as a mediator between ancient and modern ages."

Mir trug Lyaeos, mir der begeisternden
Weinrebe Sprössling; als, dem Verstürmten gleich
Auf ödem Eiland' ich mit Sehnsucht
Wandte den Blick zur Hellenenheimath.

Schamhaft erglühend, nahm ich den heiligen
Rebschoss, und hegt' ihn, nahe dem Nordgestirn,
Abwehrend Luft und Ungeschlachtheit
Unter dem Glas' in erkargter Sonne.

Von Trieb der Gottheit, siehe beschleuniget,
Stieg Rankenwaldung, übergewölbt, mich bald
Mit Blüthe, bald mit grünem Herling,
Bald mit gerötheter Traub, umschwebend.

Im süssen Anhauch träumt' ich, der Zeit entflohn,
Wettkampf mit alterthümlichem Hochgesang.
Wer lauter ist, der koste freundlich,
Ob die Ambrosiafrucht gereift sey.*

TRANSLATION.

To me brought Lyæos, to me, the inspiriting
shoot of the vine-tree; when like the cast-away
on desert island, I, with longing,
turned my eyes to my Hellenic home.

Timidly glowing, took I the holy
vine-plant, and fostered it near to the North-star;
fencing off wind and inclemency,
under the glass, in the husbanded sun.

See, impelled by the Godhead's power, rapidly
shot up the climbing grove, over-arched; me soon
with blossom, then with green berries,
then with red-blushing bunches, surrounding.

In the sweet inspiration, dreamed I of times fled;
labour to rival the high song of elder days:
Let him who pure is, cheerfully taste
if the ambrosial fruit ripened be.

Note 6.

Zigeuner-hauptmann.

Lumpen und Quark
Der ganze Mark!
Sind nicht den Teufel werth!
Weitmäulichte Laffen
Feilschen und gaffen,
Gaffen und kaufen,
Bestienhaufen!
Kinder und Fratzen,
Affen und Katzen!
Möcht' all das Zeug nicht,
Wenn ich's geschenkt kriegt'!
Dürft' ich nur über sie!

* The reader will understand that these lines are not Goethe's, but Voss's.

Zigeuner-bursch.
Wetter ! wir wollten sie !
Zigeuner-hauptmann.
Wollten sie zausen !
Zigeuner-bursch.
Wollten sie lausen !
Zigeuner-hauptmann.
Mit zwanzig Mann
Mein wär' der Kram !

I attempted to translate this, but find it impossible to do it in such a way as not greatly to disserve the author.

The *Jahrmarkt zu Plundersweilern* is one of the outpourings of that wild, many-coloured fancy to which Goethe sometimes gave the reins, and which stand in such wonderful contrast with the severe, chaste, antique beauty of his *Iphigenie*, the exquisite tenderness and grace of some of his songs, and the majestic, oracular tone of such poems as *Das Göttliche*. If the portion here extracted be taken to be an expression of Goethe's opinions or feelings towards the mass of mankind, I shall regret having inserted it; if it be regarded as a proof among many, that there is no state of mind or feeling which was foreign to Goethe—which he could not understand and give utterance to—I shall rejoice at having given it a place among these few "*pièces justificatives.*"

The persons of the drama are such as a German fair would naturally furnish : a quack doctor and his man, a Tyroler, a Nürnberger, &c. with their wares; venders of brooms, of cart-grease, of gingerbread; and an equal variety of buyers. It is upon this motley group that the sharp-sighted Gipsy,—the outlaw and paria,—wholly devoid of sympathies with any, moralizes thus contemptuously. Then come a pair of ballad-singers chanting forth the most edifying common places, beginning,

"Ihr lieben Christen allgemein
Wann wollt ihr euch verbessern ?" &c.

As one might say,

Good Christians all, both great and small,
When will you mend your ways ?

which of course draw down the approbation of the "*Amtmann*," or magistrate,

Other personages and incidents, all described with wonderful brevity and humour, then glide over the stage, and we are introduced to "*Hanswürst*" or Jack-pudding, and his colleague the

"*Marktschreier*," or mountebank, who usher us into a play on the story of Esther.

Last comes a *Schattenspielmann*, or galantee-show-man, whose description of the creation and deluge shows how perfectly familiar Goethe was with the sort of traditional lore which amused the simple fathers of the German people. The reader acquainted with the *Wunderhorn* will recognise some features of old friends. The wit in this little drama, or rather succession of scenes, reminds us somewhat of that of Swift; only that it is lighter, more varied, and with a tinge of romance of the simple and poetical character of the middle ages, which it would be absurd to look for in an English writer of the age of Anne. This same wild, fantastic character distinguishes it from the wit of the French school, and allies it with that of Shakspeare.

For the song "*Ich hab' mein Sach*," it would be far more easy to find parallels in both French and English. It is indeed a strain of moralizing so old, that a man may run through the whole circle of human disappointments, and say not one new thing.

The gay, vivacious expression of the verse, and the idiomatic language, are gone in the translation, which is consequently a mere lifeless body, and only serves to tell, as children say, "what it is about."

Vanitas! vanitatum vanitas!

Ich hab' mein Sach auf Nichts gestellt.
Juchhe!
Drum ist's so wohl mir in der Welt.
Juchhe!
Und wer will mein Kamerade seyn,
Der stosse mit an, der stimme mit ein,
Bei dieser Neige Wein.

Ich stellt' mein Sach auf Geld und Gut.
Juchhe!
Darüber verlor ich Freud' und Muth.
O weh!
Die Münze rollte hier und dort,
Und hascht' ich sie an einem Ort,
Am andern war sie fort.

Auf Weiber stellt' ich nun mein Sach.
Juchhe!
Daher mir kam viel Ungemach.
O weh!
Die Falsche sucht sich ein ander Theil,
Die Treue macht mir Langeweil:
Die Beste war nicht feil.

Ich stellt' mein Sach auf Reis' und Fahrt.
Juchhe!
Und liess mein Vaterlandesart.
O weh!
Und mir behagt es nirgends recht,
Die Kost war fremd, das Bett war schlecht,
Niemand verstand mich recht.

Ich stellt' mein Sach auf Ruhm und Ehr.
Juchhe!
Und sieh! gleich hatt' ein Andrer mehr.
O weh!
Wie ich mich hatt' hervorgethan,
Da sahen die Leute scheel mich an,
Hatte keinem Recht gethan.

Ich setzt' mein Sach auf Kampf und Krieg.
Juchhe!
Und uns gelang so mancher Sieg.
Juchhe!
Wir zogen in Feindes Land hinein,
Dem Freunde sollt's nicht viel besser seyn,
Und ich verlor ein Bein.

Nun hab' ich mein Sach auf nichts gestellt.
Juchhe!
Und mein gehört die ganze Welt.
Juchhe!
Zu ende geht nun Sang und Schmaus.
Nur trinkt mir alle Neigen aus;
Die letzte muss heraus!

TRANSLATION.

I have set my mind upon nothing,
Hurrah!
Therefore am I so well in the world,
Hurrah!
And he who will my comrade be,
let him drink with me, let him think with me,
over these lees of wine.

I set my mind upon gold and land,
Hurrah!
On them I lost joy and spirits,
Alas!

The coin rolled hither and thither,
and, if I caught it on the one side,
on the other it was gone.

On woman now I set my mind,
Hurrah!
Thence came to me great annoyance,
Alas!
The false one sought another love,
the true one made me very tired,—
the best was not to be got.

I set my mind on journey and travel,
Hurrah!
And left all my fatherland's ways;
Alas!
And nowhere I found true comfort:
the fare was strange, the bed was bad,—
nobody understood me right.

I set my mind on fame and honour,
Hurrah!
And lo, instantly another had more,
Alas!
When I had made myself famous,
people looked askance at me,—
I had pleased nobody.

I set my mind on fight and war,
Hurrah!
And we obtained many a victory,
Hurrah!
We marched into the enemy's land,
our friends fared not much better,—
and I lost a leg.

Now have I set my mind on nothing,
Hurrah!
and the whole world belongs to me,
Hurrah!
Song and good cheer are coming to an end,
only drink out all the lees,—
the last must be drained.

Note 7.

The scene here alluded to is the one in which the noble, true-hearted Goetz is caught in the toils of his enemies. I insert the translation of Sir Walter Scott, not because I think it gives any thing like an adequate idea of Goethe's tragedy, but because it might seem presumptuous to give another. It is moreover interesting to look back upon this early production of the great novelist, and to trace up to this accurate delineation of life in the middle ages, the bent which his genius received.

Goetz is, perhaps, the most attaching of heroes; for the simplicity and kindliness of his heart are equal to its loyalty and bravery, and his unsullied knighthood is utterly without a tinge of *morgue* or of selfishness. We see that the lion-hearted, iron-handed man is as defenceless against the wiles of his enemies, as his own child. Goethe has been reproached, and not always without reason, with the want of dignity and refinement in the characters of his women. Elizabeth and Maria are certainly not, in our sense of the word, "accomplished,"—still less, "fashionable;" but Elizabeth, in her noble simplicity and gentleness, is the fit partner of the noblest of knights, and as brave and high-souled as he; and Maria is worthy to be his sister.

Sir W. Scott's translation is little read; nor indeed is it deserving of more notice than it has received. It is much to be regretted that Goethe's best tragedies are not attempted again. The translation of Tasso I have never seen, but I hear it is feeble. Mr. William Taylor's translation of *Iphigenie* is well known, and is one of the best versions we have of any German poem. Two or three small fragments from this tragedy lately appeared in the New Monthly Magazine. From the signature "F. H." and still more from their beauty, I concluded they were by Mrs. Hemans. They were well calculated to excite a longing desire for more from the same refined and harmonious pen.

Goetz of Berlichingen.

Scene—The Council House at Heilbron.

[*The imperial Commissioners seated in judgment—the Captain and the Magistrate of the city attending.*]

Magistrate.—We have, according to your order, collected the stoutest and most hardy of our burghers to wait in the neighbourhood.

Commissioner.—We will communicate to his Imperial Majesty the zeal with which you have obeyed our illustrious commander. Are they artisans?

Magistrate.—Smiths, coopers, and carpenters; men with hands hardened by labour—and resolute here—[*Points to his breast.*]

Comm.—'Tis well!

Enter SERJEANT.

Serjeant.—Goetz von Berlichingen waits at the door.

Comm.—Admit him.

Enter GOETZ.

Goetz.—God greet you, my lords! What would ye with me?

Comm.—First, that you consider where you are, and with whom.

Goetz.—By my faith, I know it well, my lords!

Comm.—You do but your duty in owning it.

Goetz.—From the bottom of my heart!

Comm.—Be seated. [*Points to a stool.*]

Goetz.—What, there? Down below? I can stand; That stool smells of the criminal,—as, indeed, does its whole apparatus.

Comm.—Stand, then.

Goetz.—To business, if you please.

Comm.—We'll go on in order.

Goetz.—I am happy to hear it.—Would every one did as much.

Comm.—You know how you fell into our hands, and are a prisoner at discretion.

Goetz.—What will you give me if I know no such thing?

Comm.—Could I give you good manners, I would do you a good office.

Goetz.—A good office!—can you render any? Good offices are more difficult than the deeds of destruction.

Secretary.—Shall I enter all this on record?

Comm.—Only what is to the point.

Goetz.—Do as you please, for my part.

Comm.—You know how you fell into the power of the Emperor, whose paternal goodness overpowered his justice; and, instead of a dungeon, ordered you to wait your future doom, upon your knightly parole, in his beloved city of Heilbaon.

Goetz.—Well—I am here, and wait it.

Comm.—And we are here, to intimate to you his Imperial Majesty's grace and clemency. He is pleased to forgive your rebellion, to release you from the ban, and all well-deserved punishment: provided you do, with suppliant humility, receive his bounty, and subscribe the articles which shall be read unto you.

Goetz.—I am his Majesty's true servant, as ever. One word, ere you go farther: My people—where are they?—what is to become of them?

Comm.—That concerns you not.

Goetz.—So may the Emperor turn his face from you in your need! They were my companions, and they are so.—What have you done with them?

Comm.—We owe you no account of that.

Goetz.—Ah! I had forgot:—never was promise kept by you to the oppressed.—But hush!

Comm.—Our business is to lay the articles before you. Throw yourself at the Emperor's feet, and by humble supplication you may find the true way to save the life and freedom of your associates.

Goetz.—Your paper?

Comm.—Secretary, read it.

Secretary.—[*Reads.*] "I, Goetz of Berlichingen make public acknowledgement, by these presents, that I, having lately risen in rebellion against the Emperor and empire———"

Goetz.—'Tis false! I never offended either.

Comm.—Compose yourself, and hear farther.

Goetz.—I will not compose myself, and I will hear no farther. Let any one arise and bear witness:—Have I ever taken a step against the Emperor, or against the House of Austria? Have I not, in all my feuds, conducted myself as one who felt what all Germany owes to its head, and what the free knights and feudatories owe to their liege lord, the Emperor? I should be a liar and a slave, could I be persuaded to subscribe that paper.

Comm.—Yet we have strict orders to persuade you by fair means, or else to throw you into jail.

Goetz.—Into jail? Me?

Comm.—Where you may expect your fate from the hands of justice, since you will not take it from those of mercy.

Goetz.—To jail! You abuse the imperial power.—To jail! That was never his command. What, ye traitors, to dig a pit for me, and hang out your oath, your knightly honour, as the lure! To promise me permission to ward myself on parole, and then to break your treaty!

Comm.—We owe no faith to robbers.

Goetz.—Wert thou not the representative of my prince, whom I respect even in the vilest counterfeit, thou should'st swallow that word, or choke upon it. I was taken in honourable though private war. Thou mightest thank God, that gave thee glory, had'st thou ever done as gallant deeds as the least with which I am charged. [*The Commissioner makes a sign to the Magistrates of Heilbron, who go out.*] Because I would not join the iniquitous confederacy of the great, because I would not grasp at the souls and livings of the helpless—'tis in this lies my crime! I defended my own life, and the freedom of my children,—see ye any rebellion in that? The Emperor and empire were blinded to our hard case, by your flatteries. —I have, God be praised! one hand, and I have done my best to use it well.

Enter a Party of ARTISANS, armed with halberts and swords.

Goetz.—What means this?

Comm.—Ye will not hearken. Apprehend him!

Goetz.—Is that the purpose? Let not the man whose ear does not itch come too near me. One salutation from my trusty iron fist shall cure him of headach, toothach, and every ach under the wide heaven! [*They make at him. He strikes one down, and snatches a sword from another. They stand aloof.*]

Comm.—Surrender!

Goetz. [*With the sword drawn.*]—What! Wot ye not that it depends but upon myself to make way through all these hares, and gain the open field? But I will teach you how a man should keep his word. Promise to allow me free ward, and I give up my sword, and am again your prisoner.

Comm.—How! Would you treat with your Emperor sword in hand?

Goetz.—God forbid!—only with you and your worthy companions! You may go home, good people; here deliberation is of no avail, and from me there is nothing to gain, save bruises.

Comm.—Seize him, I say! What! does your allegiance to the Emperor supply you with no courage?

Goetz.—No more than the Emperor supplies them with plaster, for the wounds which their courage would earn for them.

A Police Officer enters hastily.

Officer.—The warder has just discovered, from the castle tower, a troop of more than 200 horsemen, hastening towards the town. They have already gained the hill, and seem to threaten an attack.

Comm.—Alas! alas! What can this mean?

A Soldier enters.

Soldier.—Francis of Seckingen waits at the draw-bridge, and informs you that he has heard how perfidiously you have dealt with his brother-in-law, and how fruitless has been every appeal to the justice of the Council of Heilbron. He is now come to insist upon that justice; and if refused it, he shall fire the four corners of your town within an hour, and abandon it to be plundered by his vassals.

Goetz.—My gallant brother?

Comm.—Withdraw, Goetz! [*He steps aside.*] What is to be done?

Magistrate.—Have compassion upon us and our town! Seckingen is inexorable in his wrath—he will keep his vow.

Comm.—Shall we forget what is due to ourselves and the Emperor?

Captain.—Well said, if we had but men to support our dignity! but as we are, a show of resistance would only make matters worse. We must gain time.

Magistrate.—We had better apply to Goetz, to speak a good word for us. I feel as if the flames were rising already.

Comm.—Let Goetz approach.

Goetz.—What would ye?

Comm.—Thou wilt do well to dissuade thy brother-in-law from his rebellious interference; instead of rescuing thee, he will only plunge thee deeper in destruction, and become the companion of thy fall.

Goetz.—[*Spies Elizabeth at the door, and speaks to her aside.*] Go, tell him instantly to break in, and force his way hither—only, to spare the town. As for the rascals here, if they oppose him, let him use force; there would be no great matter, had he a fair pretext for knocking them all upon the head.

[*Trampling and galloping heard. All the Magistrates show signs of consternation.*]

SCENE changes to the Front of the Council House, beset by SECKINGEN'S Cavaliers. A pause.

Enter SECKINGEN and GOETZ, from the Council House.

Goetz.—This was help from Heaven. How camest thou so much to our wish, and beyond our hope, brother?

Seckingen.—Without witchcraft. I had despatched two or three messengers to learn how it fared with thee, and heard from them of this villainy. I set out instantly, and now you have the power in your hand.

Goetz.—I ask nothing, but knightly ward upon my parole.

Seckingen.—You are too modarate. Avail yourself of fortune, which for once has placed worth above malice! They were doing injustice; we'll greet them with no kisses for their pains. They have misused the royal authority, and, if I know the Emperor, he will make thee ample reparation. You ask too little.

Goetz.—I have ever been content with little.

Seckingen.—And hence has thou ever been cut short, even of that little. My proposal is, that they shall release your servants, and permit you all to return to your castle upon your parole—not to leave it till the Emperor's pleasure be known. You will be safer there than here.

Goetz.—They will say my property is escheated to the Emperor.

Seckingen.—So say we; but, still, thou mayest dwell there, and keep it for his service till he restores it to thee again. Let them wind like eels in the mud, they shall not escape us! They will talk of the imperial dignity of their orders. We'll take that risk upon ourselves: I know the Emperor, and have some influence with him; he has ever wished to have thee in his service; thou wilt not be long in thy castle, ere thou art summoned to serve him.

Goetz.—God grant it, ere I forgot the use of arms!

Seckingen.—Valour can never be forgot, as it can never be learnt. Fear nothing! When once thou art settled, I will seek the imperial court, where my enterprizes begin to ripen. Good fortune seems to smile on them; I want only to sound the Emperor's mind. The towns of Triers and Pfalz as soon expect that the sky should fall, as that I should come down upon their heads; but I will come, like a storm of hail on the unsuspecting traveller; and if I am successful,

thou shalt soon be brother to a prince. I had hoped for thy hand in this undertaking.

Goetz.—[*Looks at his hand.*]—O! that explains to me the dream I had the morning that I promised Maria to Weislingen. I thought he professed eternal fidelity, and held my iron hand so fast that it loosened from the arm. Alas! I am at this moment more helpless and defenceless than when it was shot from me. Weislingen! Weislingen!

Seckingen.—Forget the traitor! We will darken his prospects and cross his plans, till shame and remorse shall gnaw him to death. I see, I see the downfall of my enemies—of thine, Goetz:—only half a year!

Goetz.—Thy soul soars high! I know not how, but for some time, no fair prospects have smiled upon mine. I have been in distress—I have been a prisoner ere now, but never before did I experience such a depression.

Seckingen.—Fortune gives spirits. Come, let us to the periwigs; they have had our conditions long enough, we must call for their resolution. *Exeunt.*

Note 8.

Heinrich Meyer was a native of Zürich. He enjoyed, for many years the closest intimacy with Goethe, who, as appears in the text, had a singular esteem for him. They were at Rome together, and travelled home together, in 1797, when they made the tour of the small Swiss cantons. Mention of him occurs in the *Italiänische Reise*, in the *Zweyter Aufenthalt in Rom*, and in the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*. Goethe's first interview with him was in the chapel of the Quirinal, on All Souls day, 1786; "for," observes Goethe, "the feast of All Souls is the feast of all artists, in Rome."

"The artist who gave me the information I sought," says he "was Heinrich Meyer, a Swiss, who has been studying here for some years, draws admirably in sepia, from the antique, and is well skilled in the history of art."

In the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte* (A. D. 1794) I find the following:

"As inmate of my house, I now once more possessed my oldest Roman friend, Heinrich Meyer. The recollection and prosecution of our Italian studies furnished us with daily occupation and amusement. During our last residence at Venice, we had come

to a thorough understanding of each other anew, and our union was the more intimate and perfect."

1795.—"Meyer went back to Italy; for though war had already broken out with violence in Lombardy, the other parts were as yet untouched, and we lived in the visionary hope of being able to renew the years 87 and 88. His departure robbed me of all conversation on the arts of design; and even the preparations I made to follow him led me into other pursuits."

1797.—"Friend Meyer constantly sent me most interesting letters from Italy. My preparations for following him compelled me to pursue various studies, the documents (*Acten Stücke*) regarding which are still of great service. While working out the history of Florentine art, Cellini became an important personage to me; and to make myself a thorough Florentine citizen, I took the resolution of translating his autobiography—especially, because it seemed that it might be of use to Schiller for his *Horen.*"

1798.—"From this, however," (some poetical work) "I was diverted to the arts of design, which Meyer's return from Italy just then rendered peculiarly interesting. I continued the life of Cellini, as a resting point in the history of the 18th century."

1802.—"My domestic circumstances at Weimar underwent an important change. Friend Meyer, who, ever since 1792, with the exception of some few years, had shared my roof and table, and had enlivened and benefited me by his instructive society and invaluable counsels, quitted my house in consequence of a matrimonial connexion. Nevertheless, the necessity for unbroken sympathy and concert overcame the short distance which divided us: a mutually co-operative influence in each other's pursuits remained in full activity, and experienced neither hinderance nor pause."

1803.—"As I have, all my life long, been so much on my guard against nothing as against empty words; and as a phrase which did not express some real thought or feeling appeared to me intolerable in others, impossible to myself, I suffered positive pain in translating Cellini, for which the immediate sight of objects described, or alluded to, was indespensable. I heartily regretted that I had not better employed my first journey through Florence, or my second visit to it, in taking a more perfect and accurate view of modern art. Friend Meyer, who had acquired the most fundamental knowledge of this subject, in 1796-7 helped me to the utmost of his power. Yet I still longed after the opportunity, no longer granted me, of seeing with my own eyes.

"I fell upon the thought that if Cellini's own medals, on which he piques himself so much, were not to be found some cotemporary ones might, perhaps, be obtained.

"Luckily I heard of an auction at Nürnberg, at which coins of the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century were to be sold, and I succeeded in getting possession of the whole mass. It contained not only the original series of Popes from Martin V. to Clement XI., consequently to the first quarter of the eighteenth century, but also cardinals, priests, philosophers, learned men, artists, celebrated women,—all in sharp, uninjured specimens, —some stamped, some cast; but, strange and lamentable to say, among so many hundreds, not one Cellini.

"This stimulated me to get all the historical knowledge I could; I searched Bonanni, Mazuchelli and others, and thus laid the foundation for a quite new branch of learning."

Since I collected the fragments above, I have been informed by a friend a native of Zürich, that Meyer was entirely self-educated, and had no advantages in early life but those which nature gave him.

Note 9.

As a farther illustration of Goethe's manner of viewing the traditional and formular instruction given at schools and colleges, I subjoin nearly the whole scene from which the lines in the text are extracted. Readers of German will be aware that in the later editions the words "*Spottet ihrer selbst*" are substituted for "*Bohrt sich selber Esel.*"

I have taken this scene from an unpublished version of Faust (by the translator of Von Savigny's "Vocation of our Age for Legislation and Jurisprudence.") He has not aimed at making a rhythmical translation, which, from the nature of the restraints it imposes, must of necessity be often rather a paraphrase than a translation, but has endeavoured to give the exact and literal meaning of the original; a meaning often lost sight of by others, and never without enormous loss.

In the following scene, the young student comes, full of ardour, to put himself under the tuition of Faust, whom Mephistophiles has just succeeded in utterly disgusting with the business of a teacher. He refuses to see the boy, on which Mephistophiles assumes his form and character, and this dialogue takes place.

A STUDENT enters.

Student.—I am just arrived, and come, full of devotion, to address and become acquainted with a man whom all name with reverence.

Mephistophiles.—I am flattered by your attention. You see a man like many others. Have you made any inquiry elsewhere?

Student.—Interest yourself for me, I pray you. I come with every good disposition, a little money, and youthful spirits; my mother could hardly be brought to part with me, but I would fain learn something worth learning in the world.

Mephist.—You are here at the very place for it.

Student.—Honestly speaking, I should be glad to be out again. These walls, these halls, are by no means to my taste. The space is exceedingly confined; there is not a tree, nothing green to be seen; and in the halls, on the benches,—hearing, sight, and thinking fail me.

Mephist.—It all depends on habit. Thus at first the child does not take kindly to the mother's breast, but soon finds a pleasure in nourishing itself. Just so will you daily experience a greater pleasure at the breasts of Wisdom.

Student.—I shall hang delightedly upon her neck: do but tell me how I am to attain to it.

Mephist.—Tell me, before you go farther, what faculty you fix upon?

Student.—I would wish to be profoundly learned, and should like to comprehend what is upon earth or in heaven,—science and nature.

Mephist.—You are here upon the right scent; but you must not suffer your attention to be distracted.

Student.—I am heart and soul in the cause. A little relaxation and pastime to be sure, would not come amiss on bright summer holidays.

Mephist.—Make the most of time, it glides away so fast. But method teaches you to gain time. For this reason, my good friend, I advise you to begin with a course of logic. In this study the mind is well broken in,—laced up in Spanish boots, so that it creeps circumspectly along the path of thought, and runs no risk of flickering, ignis-fatuus like, in all directions but the right. Then many a day will be spent in teaching you, that one, two, three, is necessary for that which formerly you hit off at a blow, as easily as eating and drinking. It is with the fabric of thought as with a weaver's master-piece, where one treadle moves a thousand threads, the shuttles shoot backwards and forwards, the threads flow unseen; ties, by thousands, are struck off at a blow. Your philosopher,—

he steps in and proves to you, it must have been so: the first would be so, the second so, and therefore the third and fourth so; and if the first and second were not, the third and fourth would never be. The students of all countries put a high value on this, but none have turned weavers. He who wishes to know and describe any thing living, seeks first to drive the spirit out of it; he has then the parts in his hand: only, unluckily, the spiritual bond is wanting. Chemistry terms it *encheiresis naturæ*, and mocks herself without knowing it.

Student.—I cannot quite comprehend you.

Mephist.—You will soon improve in that respect, if you learn to reduce and classify all things properly.

Student.—I am so confounded by all this; I feel as if a mill-wheel was turning round in my head.

Mephist.—In the next place before any thing else, you must set to at metaphysics. There, see that you conceive profoundly what is not made for human brains. A fine word will stand you in stead for what enters and what does not enter there. And be sure, for the first half year to adopt the strictest regularity. You will have five lectures every day. Be in as the clock strikes. Be well prepared beforehand with the paragraphs carefully conned, that you may see the better that he says nothing but what is in the book; yet write away as zealously as if the Holy Ghost were dictating to you.

Student.—You need not tell me that a second time. I can imagine how useful it is. For what one has in black and white, one can carry home in comfort.

Mephist.—But choose a faculty.

Student.—I cannot reconcile myself to jurisprudence.

Mephist.—I cannot much blame you. I know the nature of this science. Laws descend, like an inveterate hereditary disease; they trail from generation to generation, and glide imperceptibly from place to place. Reason becomes nonsense: beneficence, a plague. Wo to thee that thou art a grandson! Of the law that is born with us—of that, unfortunately there is never a question.

Student.—You increase my repugnance. Oh, happy he whom you instruct! I should like to study theology.

Mephist.—I do not wish to mislead you. As for this science, it is so difficult to avoid the wrong way; there is so much hidden poison in it, which is hardly to be distinguished from the medicine. Here, again, it is best to attend but one master, and swear by his words. Generally speaking, stick to words; you will then pass by the safe gate into the temple of certainty.

Student.—But there must be some meaning connected with the word.

Mephist.—Right! Only we must not be too anxious about that: for it is precisely where meaning fails that a word comes in most opportunely. Disputes may be admirably carried on with words; a

system may be built with words; words form a capital subject for belief: a word admits not of an iota being taken from it.

Student.—Your pardon,—I detain you by my many questions, but I must still trouble you; Would you be so kind as to add an instructive word or two on medicine? Three years is a short time, and the field, God knows, is far too wide. If one has but a hint, one can feel one's way along farther.

Mephist. [*Aside.*]—I begin to be tired of the prosing style. I must play the devil properly again. [*Aloud.*]

The spirit of medicine is easy to be caught; you study through the great and little world, to let things go on in the end—as it pleases God. It is in vain that you wander about scientifically, no man learns more than he can; he who avails himself of the passing moment—that is the proper man. You are tolerably well built, nor will you be wanting in boldness, and if you do but confide in yourself, other souls will confide in you. * * * * * *

Student.—There is some sense in that; one sees at any rate the where and the how.

Mephist.—Gray, my dear friend, is all theory, and green the golden tree of life.

Student.—I vow to you, all is a dream to me. Might I trouble you another time to hear your wisdom speak upon the grounds?

Mephist.—I am at your service, to the extent of my poor abilities.

Student.—I cannot possibly go away without placing my common-place book in your hands. Do not grudge me this token of your favour!

Mephist.—With all my heart. [*He writes and gives it back.*]

Student.—[*Reads.*] "Eritis sicut Deus, scientes bonum et malum." [*He closes the book reverentially, and takes his leave.*]

Mephist.—Only follow the old saying and my cousin the snake, and some time or other you, with your likeness to God, will be sorry enough.

Note 10.

I do not find this name in Goethe's works, and conclude that it is misspelt. In the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*, 1808, I find this:

"The presence of Kaaz, the admirable landscape-painter of Dresden, brought me great delight and instruction, especially from the ease and mastership in which he transformed my dilettanteish sketches into very fair pictures. By the manner in which he combined the beauty of water and body colours, he

brought me out of my fantastic whims to a purer style. And as proofs how the society of a master raises and bears us into another element, I preserve some leaves of that time, which mark to me, like points of light, that under such circumstances we are capable of things which both before and after seem to us impossible."

1811.—"The drawings of Kaaz, who had been too early removed from the world, were laid before me. Princess Caroline of Mecklenburg, who was distinguished for her taste and execution in landscape-painting, became possessor of a part of them."

Note 11.

Prometheus.

I annex the whole of this celebrated poem, and such a translation of it as I could accomplish. I have held to the measure of the lines as nearly as possible, and, with very few exceptions, each line contains neither more nor less than the corresponding one of the original.

The magnificent roll of some lines, the passionate abruptness, and the melancholy tenderness of others, are unfortunately lost to the English reader. Goethe's mastery over language—over the expressions suited to every conceivable subject of thought or feeling, is among his wondrous endowments. The loftiest and the meanest; the most stately severity and the wildest extravagance; words that create a shudder by their unearthly dissonances, and others that fall like soft dew upon the heart, or that bring to our senses the fresh, reviving brightness of a spring morning—each and all are "familiar in his mouth as household words,"—nor is it possible to say in which he excelled, so perfect is each in its kind. The poems which may be classed with the *Prometheus* are, the *Ganymede*, the *Gränze der Menschheit* (Limits of Humanity,) and, finer than all, *Das Göttliche* (the Godlike,)—all in irregular, unrhymed metre. Rhyme, indeed, would have been wholly out of keeping with the perfectly Greek tone of these poems.

In the *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (book 15) we find the following account of the state of mind and train of thought which gave birth to this extraordinary production. Two passages, which I have marked in italics, struck me as affording glimpses of Goethe's inmost peculiarity of mental structure.

"The common burden of humanity, which we have all to bear, more or less, must lie heaviest on those whose mental powers are the earliest and the most widely unfolded. We may grow up under the sheltering care of parents and of kindred, we may lean on brethren and on friends, we may be amused by acquaintances, we may be made happy by those we love;—yet, 'to this conclusion do we come at last,'—that man is turned back upon himself; and it appears as if even the Divinity had chosen to place himself in such a relation to man, that He cannot always respond to his reverence, confidence, and love,—at least, not in the moments of the greatest urgency.

"Often enough in my youth I had experienced that, in the moments of our uttermost need, a voice cried aloud to us, 'Physician, cure thyself!' and how often was I not forced, in bitterness of heart to sigh, 'I must tread the wine-press alone.'

"When I looked around for some support to my self-dependence, I found that the securest foundation for it was my productive talent. For some years, this never deserted me for an instant. What met my waking senses, frequently recurred to me by night, in regular, connected dreams; and as soon as I opened my eyes, either a wondrous new Whole, or a part of what had already appeared, presented itself to them.

"I commonly wrote every thing at break of day; but in the evening too, nay, deep into the night, when wine and social intercourse raise the animal spirits, people might require of me what they would. I wanted nothing but an occasion that had some character in it, and I was prepared and ready.

"And now, when I thought over this gift of nature, and found that it belonged to me as a quite peculiar possession, and could neither be helped nor hindered by any foreign influence, I willingly sought to make it the ground or basis of my whole existence. *This notion transformed itself into an image;* the old mythological figure of Prometheus occurred to me, who, severed from the Gods, peopled a world from his workshop. I felt most distinctly that nothing considerable could be produced without self-isolation. Those things of mine which had gained such applause were children of loneliness! and since I had stood in wider connexion with the world there had been no want of vigour and brilliancy of invention; but the execution halted, because, neither in prose nor in verse, had I what could properly be called a style; and in every fresh work, according to what the subject might be,

I was always forced to make tentatives and experiments beforehand.

"And since I had here to decline, nay to exclude, all help from man, I also severed myself, Promethean-wise, even from the Gods; and *so much the more naturally, since, with my character and manner of thinking, one subject of contemplation invariably swallowed up or drove away all others.*

"The fable of Prometheus had a living existence in me. I cut down the old Titanic garment to my own stature, and, without farther reflection, began to write a poem in which is depicted the incongruous relation in which Prometheus stood to the new Gods; inasmuch as he had formed men with his own hand, had animated them with the aid of Minerva, and had founded a third dynasty. And truly, the Gods then in power had abundant cause to complain, since they might thus be regarded as beings unjustly interposed between Titanus and men.

In this strange composition appears, as Monologue, that poem which is become important in German poetry as having furnished the occasion which led Lessing to declare his opposition to Jacobi on some weighty points of thought and feeling. But though (as it thus appeared) this poem may be made the subject of moral and religious discussion, yet does it properly belong to the province of poetry alone. The Titans are the extravagance of Polytheism, just as the Devil may be regarded as the extravagance of Monotheism; but the latter is no figure for poetry, any more than the One God to whom he is placed in opposition. Milton's Satan, though finely drawn, has always the disadvantage of a subaltern position; inasmuch as his whole efforts are directed towards the destruction of the magnificent creation of a higher Being. Prometheus, on the contrary, stands on a vantage ground, from having the power to create and to model, in defiance of higher beings. It is a beautiful thought, too, and most consonant with poetry, to trace the creation of man, not to the highest rulers of the world, but to an intermediate being, who, however, as decendant of the elder dynasty, is majestic and important enough for such a work. And, indeed, the Greek mythology affords exhaustless riches of divine and human symbols.

"The titanic, gigantic, heaven-storming character, however, afforded no material for my vein of poetry. Rather did it suit me to depict that peaceful, plastic, and ever patient resistance, which owns a superior power, but seeks to equal it. Yet even the more daring of the race were my saints. Received into the society of the Gods, they would not behave obsequiously enough,—incurred the anger of their hosts and patrons, as insolent guests, and drew upon themselves a miserable sentence of condemnation. I pitied them. The ancients had already regarded their destiny

and condition as profoundly tragical: I placed them in the back ground in my *Iphigenie* as members of a colossal opposition, and I am indebted to them for a part of the effect which that piece had the good fortune to produce."

Prometheus.

Bedecke deinen Himmel, Zeus,
Mit Wolkendunst,
Und übe, dem Knaben gleich,
Der Disteln köpft,
An Eichen dich und Bergeshöhn;
Musst mir meine Erde
Doch lassen stehn,
Und meine Hütte, die du nicht gebaut,
Und meinen Herd,
Um dessen Gluth
Du mich beneidest.
Ich kenne nichts aermeres
Unter der Sonn', als euch, Götter!
Ihr nähret kümmerlich
Von Opfersteuern
Und Gebetshauch
Eure Majestät,
Und darbtet, wären
Nicht Kinder und Bettler
Hoffnungsvolle Thoren.
Da ich ein Kind war,
Nicht wusste wo aus noch ein,
Kehrt' ich mein verirrtes Ague
Zur Sonne, als wenn drüber wär'
Ein Ohr, zu hören meine Klage,
Ein Herz, wie mein's,
Sich des Bedrängten zu erbarmen.
Wer half mir
Wider der Titanen Uebermuth?
Wer rettete vom Tode mich,
Von Sklaverey?
Hast du nicht Alles selbst vollendet,
Heilig glühend Herz?
Und glühtest jung und gut,
Betrogen, Rettungsdank
Dem Schlafenden da droben?
Ich dich ehren? Wofür?
Hast du die Schmerzen gelindert
Je des Beladenen?

Hast du die Thränen gestillet
Je des Geängsteten?
Hat nicht mich zum Manne geschmiedet
Die allmächtige Zeit
Und das ewige Schicksal,
Meine Herrn und deine?
  Wähntest du etwa,
Ich solite das Leben hassen,
In Wüsten fliehen,
Weil nicht alle
Blüthenträume reiften?
  Hier sitz 'ich, forme Menschen
Nach meinem Bilde;
Ein Geschlecht, das mir gleich sey,
Zu leiden, zu weinen,
Zu geniessen und zu freuen sich,
Und dein nicht zu achten
Wie ich!

TRANSLATION.

  Curtain thy heavens, Zeus,
With clouds and mist;
And exercise thine arm,
(Like a boy cropping thistles,)
On oaks and mountain-tops.
Yet must thou leave
My earth still standing;
And my hut, which thou buildedst not,
And my hearth,
Whose flame
Thou enviest me.
  I know nought more pitiful
Under the sun, than you, ye gods!
You nourish scantily
With forced offerings,
And breath of prayer,
Your majesty;
And would starve, were not
Children and beggars
Hope-deluded fools.
  When I was a child,
Unknowing where to turn,
I raised my wilder'd eye

To the sun, as if there, above, were
An ear to hear my plaint;
A heart, like mine,
To pity the oppressed.
  Who succoured me
Against the Titans' insolence?
Who rescued me
From death, from slavery?
Didst thou not, thou thyself, achieve it all,
Holily-glowing heart?
And didst thou not, in young and credulous love,
Deceived one, pour out thy warm thanks for safety
To the sleeper there, above?
  I reverence thee!—Wherefore?
Hast *thou* ever lightened the woes
Of the heavily laden?
Hast *thou* ever stilled the tears
Of the troubled in spirit?
Did not almighty Time,
And eternal Fate
(My Lords and thine,)
Fashion me Man?
  Dreamest thou, belike,
I should hate life,—
Flee to the desert,
Because not all
Dream-blossoms ripened?
  Here I sit—form Men
After my image:
A race that may be like me—
That may suffer,—weep,—
Enjoy,—rejoice,—
And heed not thee—
Like me!*

Note 12.

This is the answer of Faust, to Margaret's anxious and affectionate inquiries into the state of his religious opinions and belief

* This last line is bad, and I know not how to better it. The German is, *As I.* I should have preferred that, if I had not feared it would have been too repulsive to an English ear.—*Transl.*

Wer darf Ihn nennen?
Und wer bekennen:
Ich glaub' Ihn.
Wer empfinden
Und sich unterwindon
Zu sagon: ich glaub' Ihn nicht?
Der Allumfasser,
Der Allerhalter,
Fasst und erhält er nicht
Dich, mich, sich selbst?
Wölbt sich der Himmel nicht da droben?
Liegt die Erde nicht hierunten fest?
Und steigen freundlich blickend
Ewige Sterne nicht hier auf?
Schau' ich nicht Aug' in Auge dir,
Und drängt nicht alles
Nach Haupt und Herzen dir,
Und webt in ewigem Geheimniss
Unsichtbar sichtbar neben dir?
Erfüll' davon dein Herz, so gross es ist,
Und wenn du ganz in dem Gefühle selig bist,
Nenn'es dann wie du willet,
Nenn's Glück! Herz! Liebe! Gott!
Ich habe keinen Namen
Dafür! Gefühl ist alles;
Name ist Schall und Rauch,
Umnebelnd Himmelsgluth.

TRANSLATION.

Who can name Him?
And who declare
I believe in Him!
Who can feel,
And dare affirm
I believe in Him not?
The All-encompassing,
The All-sustaining,
Encompasses, sustains he not
Thee, me, Himself?
Spreads not the heav'n its vault above?
Lies not the earth steadfast beneath?
And climb not the eternal stars
Beaming with friendly light?
Doth not mine eye gaze in the depths of thine?

Doth not all that is
Press on thy head and heart,
And visibly, invisibly,
Weave its mysterious web eternally around thee?
Fill with it now thy heart—howe'er capacious—
And when that feeling mounts to perfect bliss,
Then call it as thou wilt—
Call it joy! heart! love! God!
I have no name for it—
Feeling is all—
Name is but sound and vapour,
Inshrouding heaven's glow!

As there exist translations of this sublime and celebrated passage, it seems necessary that I should explain the presumption of giving one of my own; and this I can only do by annexing those which are before the public, and pointing out the reasons which led me to regard them as wholly unsatisfactory.

Lord Leveson Gower's is as follows:

Who could himself compel
To say he disbelieves
The Being whose presence all must feel so well?
The All-creator,
The All-sustainer,
Does he not uphold
Thyself, and me, and all?
Does not yon vaulted Heaven expand
Round the fast earth on which we stand?
Do we not hail it, though from far
The light of each eternal star?
Are not my eyes in yours reflected?
And, all these living proofs collected,
Do they not flash upon the brain,
Do they not press upon the heart,
The trace of Nature's mystic reign?
Inhale the feeling till it fill
The breast, then call it what you will.
Call it an influence from above,
Faith, heaven, or happiness, or love,—
I have no name by which to call
The secret power,—'tis feeling all.

It begins with one of the most singular examples of the misapprehension, not only of the particular passage in question, but of the *whole* genius of an author, that I remember to have seen. Goethe says:

"Who may name Him?
And who affirm
I believe in Him?
Who can feel,
And dare declare
I believe in Him not?"

Now the translator has taken not the slightest notice of the first three lines, and has thus completely succeeded in destroying not only all that is remarkable in the sentiment, but all that is characteristic of Faust or of Goethe. For the multitude have, in all ages, been ready enough to ask "who can feel, and dare declare, I believe in Him *not?*" But what the poet puts into the mouth of Faust—the insatiable craver after *knowledge*,—is, the expression of the eternal problem, the insuperable difficulty, the unappeasable doubt, which render it impossible to men like him to affirm either belief or unbelief on such a subject. If Lord Leveson Gower had any scruples about exhibiting this state of the mind of a man who had been made desperate from unsatisfied desire of knowledge, "Faust" was surely an extraordinary choice. That he was not sensible of his omission, and did not see that, by taking away half, he destroyed the whole, is hardly credible.

All-creator is not only no translation of *Allum-fasser*, but stands in direct and most important contradiction to it, and is utterly at variance with the pantheistical tendency and character of the whole passage.

"The being whose presence all must feel so well,"

there is no authority for in the original.

"Does he not uphold
Thyself, and me, *and all?*"

is as prosaic aud vulgar as it is unfaithful; Goethe says, "Thee, me, *Himself.*"

The lines—

"And all these living proofs collected,"

and the three succeeding, are surely very wide of the original.

No allusion is made to the *unsichtbar sichtbar neben dir:*

"The trace of Nature's mystic reign"

is not like any thing in the original.

"Inhale the feeling till it fill
The breast, then call it what you will,"

is feeble and vulgar.

"Call it an influence from above,
Faith, heaven, or happiness or love,—"

Here again the translator has most unfortunately disguised the original. Of "influence from above," Goethe says not a word,

"Call it as thou wilt———
Call it happiness, heart, love, *God*—"

the concluding word being the very one to which all Gretchen's inquiries tended, and that which contains the sum of what Faust designs as his answer. If the translator found any thing irreverent in this line, I cannot but think he quite misunderstood Goethe. At all events, it seems to me contrary to the morality which ought to regulate our dealings with foreign authors, to garble and distort their meaning, particularly on points so delicate. If the public cannot be made to understand what the duties of translators are, it is at least always possible to append a note disclaiming participation in this or that opinion. The degree to which the last line loses in poetry, I need not point out. I regret the deficiencies of this passage the more, because there is much to admire in Lord Leveson Gower's translation. The ease and grace of the versification are often remarkable, and some passages are very happily rendered.

Madame de Staël, in her *Allemagne*, has given a version of this passage, which, being in prose, has not the excuse afforded by the restraints of verse. Yet hers is quite as offensively inaccurate; and if the one is deadened by English one-sidedness, the other is made ridiculous by French affectation and *phrases*.

"Qui peut nommer la *divinité*, et dire, je la *connois*? Qui *peut être sensible et ne* pas *y croire?* Le *soutien de* cet univers, n'embrasse-t-il pas toi, moi, *la nature entière?* Le ciel ne s'abaisse-t-il pas en pavillon sur nos têtes? La terre n'est elle pas inébranlable sous nos pieds? et les étoiles eternelles, du haut de leur sphère, ne nous regardentelles pas *avec amour?* Tes yeux ne se réfleschissent-ils pas dans mes yeux *attendris?* Un mystère éternel, invisible et visible, n'attire-t-il pas *mon cœur vers le tien?* Remplis ton âme de ce mystère, et, quand tu éprouves la felicité suprème *du sentiment*, appelle-la cette felicité, cœur, amour, Dieu,—n'importe. Le sentiment est tout;

les noms ne sont qu'un vain bruit, une vaine furnée qui obscurcit la clarté des cieux."

Where did Madame de Staël find "*la Divinité?*" Goethe expressly says he has "no name" for that of which he speaks. "*Je la conçois*" has no resemblance to the meaning. "*Qui peut être sensible,*" is a poor dilution of the original, and gives it a sentimental, mawkish air, wholly inappropriate. "*Le soutien de cet univers*" is all foisted in,—and, like "*la divinité,*" above, destroys the sublime mystery and simplicity which are conveyed by the *Ihn* and *Er* of the original. "*La nature entière*" is like Lord L. Gower's "and all,"—an unpardonable substitution for "*sich selbst.*" "*Mes yuex attendris,*"—another *phrase* out of a French novel:—Faust does not talk so. The next sentence has not the least resemblance to the original; Goethe says, "*drängt nicht* alles *nach Haupt und Herzen dir?*" This mysterious pressure of the Great Whole on the head and heart is converted into, "*n'attire-t-il pas mon cœur vers le tien.*" This it is, to fall into the hands of the French. Faust, like the heroes of antiquity, must speak according to the prescribed *formulæ* of love-making. The Faust of Goethe says nothing about "*mon cœur.*"

"*De ce mystère*" is an interpolation: "*la felicité suprème du sentiment*" sounds to me very unlike the original, but I suppose it is the nearest French for it.

"*Appelle-la cette felicité,*" is not accurate.

The conclusion, which Lord L. Gower has so unaccountably spoiled, is faithfully rendered, except that "*gluth,*" glow, or fire, is not "*clarté.*"

I am afraid these observations on two persons of high reputation may be thought to come with a very ill grace from so obscure a pen. If there is any appearance of conceit or presumption in them, I shall extremely regret it; but it seemed to me greater presumption to prefer a translation of my own without assigning some reason. The assertion that these translations were bad, appeared equally to require proof, and I could not say what I thought of them, and say less. The morality of translating has, unfortunately, been understood and practised by no people but the Germans, and it is time that the conscientious endeavour to understand and render an author should not be all on one side.

Note 13.

I think the reader will thank me for subjoining this elegant poem.

Lili's Park.

Ist doch keine Menagerie
So bunt, als meiner Lili ihre!
Sie hat darin die wunderbarsten Thiere,
Und kriegt sie 'rein, weiss selbst nicht wie.
O wie sie hüpfen, laufen, trappeln,
Mit abgestumpften Flügeln zappeln,
Die armen Prinzen allzumal,
In nie gelöschter Liebesqual!

Wie heiss die Fee?—Lili?—Fragt nicht nach ihr!
Kennt ihr sie nicht, so danket Gott dafür.

Welch ein Geräusch, welch ein Gegacker,
Wenn sie sich in die Thüre stellt
Und in der Hand das Futterkörbchen hält!
Welch ein Gequick, welch ein Gequacker!
Alle Bäume, alle Büsche scheinen lebendig zu werden:
So stürzen sich ganze Herden
Zu ihren Füssen; sogar im Bassin die Fische
Patschen ungeduldig mit den Köpfen heraus:
Und sie streut dann das Futter aus
Mit einem Blick—Götter zu entzücken,
Geschweigie die Bestien. Da gehts an ein Picken,
An ein Schlürfen, an ein Hacken;
Sie stürzen einander über die Nacken,
Schieben sich, drängen sich, reissen sich,
Jagen sich, ängsten sich, beissen sich,
Und das all um ein Stückchen Brod,
Das, trocken, aus den schönen Händen schmeckt,
Als hätt' es in Ambrosia gesteckt.
Aber der Blick auch! Der Ton!
Wenn sie ruft: Pipi! Pipi!
Zöge den Adler Jupiters vom Thron;
Der Venus Taubenpaar,
Ja der eitle Pfau sogar,
Ich schwöre, sie kämen,
Wenn sie den Ton von weitem nur vernähmen.

Denn so hat sie aus des Waldes Nacht
Einen Bären, ungeleckt und ungezogen,

Unter ihren Beschluss herein betrogen,
Unter die zahme Compagnie gebracht,
Und mit den andern zahm gemacht:
Bis auf einen gewissen Punkt, versteht sich!
Wie schön und ach! wie gut
Schien sie zu seyn! Ich hätte mein Blut
Gegeben, um ihre Blumen zu begiessen.

" Ihr sagtet *ich!* Wie? Wer?"
Gut denn, ihr Herrn, g'rad'aus: Ich bin der Bär;
In einem Filetschurz gefangen,
An einem Seidenfaden ihr zu Füssen,
Doch wie das alles zugegangen,
Erzähl' ich euch zur andern Zeit;
Dazu bin ich zu wüthig heut.

Denn ha! steh' ich so an der Ecke,
Und hör' von weitem das Geschnatter,
Seh' das Geflitter, das Geflatter,
Kehr' ich mich um
Und brumm'
Und renne rückwärts eine Strecke,
Und seh' mich um
Und brumm',
Und laufe wieder eine Strecke,
Und kehr' doch endlich wieder um.

Dann fängts auf einmal an zu rasen,
Ein macht' ger Geist schnaubt aus der Nasen,
Es wildzt die innere Natur.
Was, du ein Thor, ein Häschen nur!
So ein Pipi! Eichhörnchen, Nuss zu knacken,
Ich sträube meinen borst'gen Nacken,
Zu dienen ungewöhnt,
Ein jedes aufgestutzte Bäumchen höhnt
Mich an! ich flieh' vom Boulingreen,
Vom niedlich glatt gemähten Grase;
Der Buchsbaum zieht mir eine Nase,
Ich flieh' ins dunkelste Gebüsch hin,
Durch's Gehäge zu dringen,
Ueber die Planken ze springen!
Mir versagt Klettern und Sprung,
Ein Zauber bleit mich nieder;
Ein Zauber häkelt mich wieder,
Ich arbeite mich ab, und bin ich matt genung,

Dann lieg' ich an gekünstelten Cascaden,
Und kau' und wein' und wälze halb mich todt,
Und ach! es hören meine Noth
Nur porzellanene Oreaden.

Auf Einmahl! Ach, es dringt
Ein seliges Gefühl durch alle meine Glieder!
Sie ist's, die dort in ihrer Laube singt!
Ich höre die liebe, liebe Stimme wieder,
Die ganze Luft ist warm, ist blüthevoll.
Ach! singt sie wohl, dass ich sie hören soll?
Ich dringe zu, tret' alle Sträuche nieder,
Die Büsche, die Bäume weichen mir,
Und so—zu ihren Füssen liegt das Thier.
Sie sieht es an: "Ein Ungeheuer! doch drollig!
Für einen Bären zu mild,
Für einen Pudel zu wild,
So zottig, täpfig, knollig!"
Sie streicht ihm mit dem Füsschen über'n Rücken;
Er denkt im Paradiese zu seyn.
Wie ihn alle sieben Sinne jücken!
Und Sie sieht ganz gelassen drein.
Ich küss' ihre Schuhe, kau' an den Sohlen,
So sittig, als ein Bär nur mag;
Ganz sachte heb' ich mich, und schwinge mich verstohlen
Leis' an ihr Knie—Am günst'gen Tag
Lässt sie's geschehn, und kraut mir um die Ohren,
Und patscht mich mit muthwillig derbem Schlag;
Ich knurr', in Wonne neu geboren;
Dann fordert sie mit süssem, eitlem Spotte:
Allons, tout doux! eh la ménotte!
Et faites serviteur,
Comme un joli seigneur!
So treibt sie's fort mit Spiel und Lachen;
Es hofft der oft betrogne Thor;
Doch will er sich ein Bisschen unnütz machen,
Hält sie ihn kurz, als wie zuvor.

Doch hat sie auch ein Fläschchen Balsamfeuers,
Dem keiner Erde Honig gleicht,
Wovon sie wohl einmal, von Lieb' und Treu erweicht,
Um die verlechzten Lippen ihres Ungeheuers
Ein Tröpfchen mit der Fingerspitze streicht,
Und wieder flieht, und mich mir überlässt,
Und ich dann, losgebunden, fest
Gebannt bin, immer nach ihr ziehe,
Sie suche, schaudre, wieder fliehe—

So lässt sie den zerstörten Armen gehn,
Ist seiner Lust, ist seinen Schmerzen still;
Ha! manchmal lässt sie mir die Thür halb offen stehn,
Seitblickt mich spottend an, ob ich nicht fliehen will.
Und ich!—Götter, ist's in euren Händen,
Dieses dumpfe Zauberwerk zu enden;
Wie dank' ich, wenn ihr mir die Freiheit schafft!
Doch sendet ihr mir keine Hülfe neider—
Nicht ganz umsonst reck' ich so meine Glieder:
Ich fühl's! Ich schwör's! noch hab' ich Kraft.

TRANSLATION.

There is really no menagerie
so gay as my Lili's.
She has in it the strangest beasts,
and gets them in she knows not how herself.
Oh, how they jump, and run, and tramp!
How they flap with their clipped wings!—
The poor dear Princes, all *pêle-mêle*,
in a never-extinguished love-torment!

What is the fairy called?—Lili?—Ask not after her!
If you know her not, thank God therefore.

What a bustle, what a cackle,
when she comes to the door,
and holds the food-basket in her hand!
What a squeaking, what a quacking!
Every tree, every bush, seems to be alive.
Thus do whole troops rush
to her feet. Even the fish in the ponds
splash impatiently, with their heads out of the water.
And then she strews the food about,
with a look—to ravish gods,—
much more beasts. Then begins a picking,
a gobbling, a pecking.
They tumble over each other's necks;
shove each other, squeeze each other, pull each other,
drive each other, frighten each other, bite each other,
and that,—all for a little bit of bread,—
which, dry as it is, out of her beautiful hands,
tastes as if it had been steeped in ambrosia.

But the look, too!—the tone!—
when she calls "Pipi, Pipi!"—
would draw the eagle from Jupiter's throne;
the pair of doves from Venus;
nay, even the vain peacock;—
I would swear they would come,
If they heard *that* tone, from ever so far.

For thus has she enticed hither, out of the night of woods,
a bear, unlicked and untutored,
under her rule;
brought him into the tame company,
and made him tame like the others—
to a certain pitch—(understood of course.)
How beautiful,—and ah! how kind—
seemed she to be! I would have given my blood,
only to water her flowers!
"I?" say you, "How? Who?"
Well then, good sirs, to be plain, I am the bear,—
caught in a net,—
bound with a silken cord, at her feet.
But, how all that came to pass,
I will tell you another time:—
for that I am too furious to-day.

For ah! I stand thus in a corner,
and hear from afar the noise;
see the fluttering and flapping;
turn myself around
and growl,
and run backwards a bit,
and look round me,
and growl,
and run again a bit,
and at last,—I return.

Then, all at once, rage stirs within me;
a fierce spirit snorts from out my nose!
my inmost nature storms.
"What! thou be a fool,—a coward hare?
Such a "Pipi!"—a little squirrel to crack nuts!"
I shake my brushy neck,
to serve, unused.
Every little upstart tree mocks at me:
I flee from the bowling-green;
from the pretty smooth-shaven grass:
The box-tree turns up its nose at me.
I flee away to the darkest thicket,
break through the hedge,

leap over the pales;—
a spell lies like lead upon me;
forbids me to scramble or to leap:
a spell draws me back again;—
I wear myself out, and when I am tired enough
I lie down by the artificial cascade,
and champ, and weep, and toss myself half dead;
and ah! my anguish is heard
by porcelain Oreads alone.

All at once,—ah, what a blissful feeling
rushes through every limb!
'Tis she who sings there, in her bower!
I hear the dear, dear voice again:
The whole air is warm—is redolent of bloom.
Ah! does she then indeed sing that I may hear her?
I rush forward—trample down all the bushes,—
the shrubs, the trees, bend before me,
and thus—at her feet lies the beast.
She looks at him—"A monster, but yet droll!
For a bear too mild,
For a poodle too wild;
so shaggy, clumsy, cumbersome!"
She strokes his back with her little foot;—
he thinks himself in paradise.
How all his seven senses reel!
and *she*—looks down quite carelessly.
I kiss her shoe; I gnaw the sole
as gently as ever a bear can.
Softly I raise myself up, and by stealth I throw myself
lightly on her knee. On a favourable day
she suffers it, and scratches me under the ear,
and pats me with wantonly heavy slap;—
I growl, new-born in ecstacy.
Then cries she, in sweet triumphant sport,
Allons, tout doux! eh la ménotte!
et faites serviteur,
comme un joli seigneur!
Thus goes she on with jest and laugh.
The oft-deluded fool hopes on;
but should he grow importunate,
she holds him in, tight as before.

But she has, too, a little flask of balsam-fire—
which no honey on earth equals,—
with which she sometimes, softened by his love and truth,
on the parching lips of her monster
puts a little drop with the tip of her finger,
and then runs away, and leaves me to myself.

and I then, though loosed, am spell-bound:
I follow ever after her,
seek her, shudder, flee again:—
Thus does she let the poor disturbed one go;
is heedless of his pleasures—of his pains:—
Nay, many a time she leaves the door half open,
and looks archly askance at me, as if to ask if I will not escape.

And I!—Ye gods! it is in your hands
to end this tantalizing witchery!—
How should I thank you, if you would give me freedom!
Yet send me down no help:—
Not quite in vain do I thus stretch my limbs;
I feel it! I swear it! I have yet strength.

Note 14.

Amalie, daughter of Duke Charles of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel, born October, 1739. During the latter half of the last century, this remarkable woman was the presiding spirit of a court which, as a nursery of art, may be compared to that graced by the presence of Ariosto and Tasso. She it was who afforded to men of letters that encouragement and support they looked for in vain from the mightier princes of the empire; to her they were indebted for a point of union, and for an adequate provision. Nor was it only as a munificent patroness, or as an enlightened and accomplished judge of literature and art, that Amalie has a claim to universal gratitude.

Married in her seventeenth year, to Duke Ernst August Constantine, she was left a widow in her nineteenth. By a wise administration, she found means to remedy the calamitous consequences of the seven years' war; to accumulate in her treasury a considerable sum of money without imposing any additional burdens on her subjects, and to avert from them the consequences of the famine which desolated Saxony in 1773.

Scarcely, however, had she provided for these most urgent necessities of her people, than she turned her attention to the circumstances which alone ennoble existence. She founded new institutions for their intellectual improvement, and perfected those already in existence. She appointed the illustrious Wieland governor to her son (the late duke,) and attracted men of the highest talent to Weimar—Herder, Goethe, Seckendorf, Knebel, Böttiger, Bode, Musæus, and, more lately, Schiller.

It could be only by the union of the rarest qualities of heart and mind, that the princess of so small a state could succeed in assembling around her more distinguished men than were to be found in any cotemporary court, whatever were its power or splendour. That her personal character contributed more to this than her rank or station, is proved by the circumstance that she continued to be surrounded by the same persons after she had resigned the government into the hands of her son, in 1775. Her palace at Weimar, her country houses at Tieffurth and Ettersburg, never ceased to be the *rendezvous* of literary men and travellers of merit.

A tour in Italy, which she made in 1798, in company with Goethe, heightened her taste for the arts. Thus did this true heiress of the noble qualities and the love of science, which distinguished the house of Brunswick, win the glory of having afforded honour and encouragement to the most illustrious writers of Germany.

The 14th of October, 1806, broke her heart. She survived it but a few months.

Abridged from the Conversations-Lexicon.

In the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*, (A. D. 1807,) I find the following notice.

"Shortly after this, the Duchess Amalie quitted her native land—which, to her, was shaken to its foundations,—nay, ruined. To all, this was cause of mourning; to me, of peculiar grief. A hasty little memoir, put together rather officially than in any higher and more deep-felt sense, is a mere acknowledgment for how much more I shall remain indebted to her memory."

This slight sketch will be found annexed. It cannot, indeed, be regarded as any adequate expression of Goethe's sentiments.

"To the Memory of the most illustrious lady and princess, ANNA AMALIE, dowager Duchess of SACHSEN-WEIMAR and EISENACH, born Duchess of BRAUNSCHWEIG and LUNEBURG. 1807.

"In the life of the great of this world, so long as it pleases Heaven to prolong it, ought to serve as an example to the rest

of mankind, (whereby constancy in misfortune, and beneficent activity in prosperity, may be more widely diffused abroad,) the consideration of a remarkable career must needs be of great importance; since a brief survey of the virtues and the deeds of the departed may be presented to the emulation of every one, as a most precious gift and most noble object of emulation.

"The life of the princess whose memory we are met to commemorate, deserves to be engraven on the remembrance of all, but especially on that of such as had formerly the happiness of living under her government, and, more recently, under that influence which she never ceased to exert, as Mother of her country (*Landesmuttur;*)—on whom she conferred so many benefits, and whom she honoured with her favour, and her friendship.

"Sprung from a house, rich from its remotest ancestry, in the Renowned, the High-minded, and the Valiant; niece of a king, the greatest man of his time; surrounded, from childhood, by relations in whom greatness of mind was hereditary,—who scarcely knew any other object of desire or spring of action than such as were honourable, and deserving of the admiration of posterity; in the midst of a court full of mental activity, and continually advancing in civilization, and of a city distinguished for its various institutions for the cultivation of art and science, she was early conscious of the germs of an answering superiority in herself, and delighted in the education which she received from the most excellent instructors, who subsequently gave lustre to the church and to letters.

"She was early removed from the place of her birth by her matrimonial connexion with a young prince, with whom she began life under the brightest auspices. A son was the fruit of this nnion (1757,) and was the centre of a thousand joys and hopes; but his father's pleasure in him was destined to be short. The duke died before his child was two years old. A second son did not see the light till after his death.

"Guardian of two infants,—herself not yet of age,—she found herself, at the breaking out of the seven years' war, in a most anxious situation; bound, as princess of the empire, to adhere to the side which had declared itself against her illustrious uncle, and herself pressed upon by the proximity of military operations. She was, however, somewhat tranquillized by a visit from the great general and monarch. Her states experienced considerable annoyance, but no destructive ravages. At length arrived the wished-for peace; and her first cares were those of a twofold mother,—for her country and for her sons. With unwearied patience and gentleness she laboured to implant all that was good and useful, even where it would not immediately take root. She supported and fed her people during a protracted and frightful

famine. Every act and decree of her reign was distinguished by a just, free, and noble spirit.

"In the interior of domestic life, her tenderest cares were devoted to her sons. Instructors of the highest worth and merit were placed about them, and she thus drew around her an assemblage of the most eminent men, and laid the foundations of all that was destined to have so important and beneficial an influence, not only on her own peculiar country, but on the whole German Fatherland.

"Whatever can give grace or charm to life, she sought, with wise moderation, to collect around her; and she thought with joy and confidence of delivering up the government she had administered so conscientiously, into the hands of her illustrious son (1774,) when the unlooked for disaster of the burning of the palace of Weimar changed the anticipated pleasure into mourning and distress. But here also she displayed her native character; and after making every arrangement that could alleviate, nay improve, the consequences of this calamity, she surrendered the government into the hands of her eldest son, now of age, and retired, full of honour and dignity, to the enjoyment of a less anxious existence.

"Her regency was the source of manifold benefits to the country; she had converted even misfortunes into occasions of improvement. She encouraged and employed all who displayed capacity for public usefulness. Jurisprudence, political economy, policy,* acquired certainty, consistency, development. An entirely new spirit had come over court and city. Eminent foreigners, learned men, artists, resorted to it as visiters or as residents. The free use of a large library was granted to the public; a good theatre was supported; and the rising generation excited to culture of the mind and taste. The state of the university of Jena was inquired into. The liberality of the princess rendered practicable all the projects submitted to her; and thus was this institution placed on a secure basis, and rendered susceptible of yet farther improvements.

"With what joyful feelings must she now see all her earlier wishes fulfilled above her hopes and expectations, under the government of her indefatigable son, while his happy marriage gave the promise of a posterity worthy of her!

"The tranquil consciousness of having done her duty,—of having fulfilled her task—accompanied her into the repose of private life, in which she was happy, surrounded by art and

* Policy—*i. e.* all that relates to police in the more extensive meaning of the term.—*Transl.*

science, and by the natural beauties of her residence. She delighted in the conversation of persons of talent; and sought occasions of forming connexions of this kind, of maintaining them, and of turning them to account: indeed there is no one of any note connected with Weimar whose powers were not, sooner or later, called forth in her circle. Thus did she prepare herself for a journey across the Alps, where she sought health and a milder climate; for she had, shortly before had an attack which threatened her life. She anticipated the highest enjoyment from the actual perception of that perfection of art, of which she had long had a divining sense,—especially in music, which she had studied scientifically in early life; and from a new extension of her views of life by the acquaintance of society of the distinguished and accomplished persons, native and foreign, who graced those fortunate regions, and who exalted every hour of social intercourse into a remarkable epoch in existence.

"Many enjoyments awaited her when she returned, adorned and enriched with the treasures of art and of experience. We hoped that as a compensation for so many sufferings and privations, her life would now glide on in a calm and lengthened old age.

"But it seemed otherwise to the All-directing. She had deeply felt the various trials which had attended her course through life; —the early loss of two heroic brothers, killed in battle;* of a third who died devoting himself for others; of a beloved absent son; and, more recently, of a brother who was her guest, and of a great grandson of extraordinary hope and promise. Yet had her courage and strength of mind never forsaken her; she had always commanded herself and resumed the thread of life.

"But in these latter times, when pitiless war, after so long sparing us, at length fell upon us and upon her; when, to snatch her beloved grandchildren from the midst of the wild tumult, she fled from her dwelling and encountered the dangers and difficulties of travel; when she beheld the calamities which had befallen the exalted house with which she was connected by blood, and those which menaced her own, and learned the death of her last remaining loved and honoured brother; when she saw all the hopes, all the expectations of her youth, which had rested on the securest claims, on the well-earned glory of her family dashed to the ground on every side; then, it seemed her heart could resist no

* In the ducal vault of Brunswick nine of the coffins are marked by the badge which tells that they fell in battle. That of the prince mentioned above, who lost his life in the attempt to save some persons perishing in an inundation, has received the same distinction.—*Transl.*

longer, and her courageous spirit lost its counterpoise to the pressure of earthly powers. Yet did she remain like herself—externally calm, pleasing, graceful, compassionate and sympathizing; and no one of those around her could anticipate that the hour of release was so near. She made no complaints of illness—she seemed hardly to suffer—she departed out of the company of her people as she had lived. (1807.)

"Her death ought to afflict us only as the Necessary, the Inevitable; not to be embittered by accidental, distressing, gloomy accessories. And to which of us at the present moment, when the remembrance of past, united to the fear of future, evil, troubles and appals many a spirit, is not such a picture of firm, serene resignation consolatory and supporting? Which of us can say, my sorrows were equal to hers? And if there be any one who can institute so sad a comparison, he, too, must feel strengthened and encouraged by so lofty an example.

"Yes: we return to our first observation:—

"This is the prerogative of the noblest natures—that their departure to higher regions exercises a no less blessed influence than did their abode on earth; that they lighten us from above, like stars by which to steer our course—so often interrupted by storms; that those to whom we turned in life as the Beneficent, the Helpful, now attract our longing, aspiring glance as the Perfected, the Blessed."—(*From Vol. xxxii. of Goethe's works, last edition.*)

Note 15.

See Madame de Staël's *Allemagne*. The suppressed scene described by Falk was afterwards published, as most readers of German are aware, in the second part of Faust. It was however considerably altered.

Note 16.

Friedrich von Schlegel, younger brother of the accomplished and celebrated translator of Shakspeare and Calderon, was born at Hannover in 1772. Though destined to commerce, he received a liberal education, and, in his sixteenth year, prevailed on his

father to allow him to devote himself to literature. He studied at Gottingen and Leipsig. His first important work was the *Griechen und Römer*, to which is annexed an essay on the Platonic Diotima, and on the representations of female character in the Greek poets. In this work he gave evidence of that extensive erudition, that originality of thought, and that power over historico-critical weapons, which he afterwards displayed in the field of ancient and modern poetry.

In 1799 he published his *Lucinde*, a work of fancy, sentiment, and reflection. Rarely have opinions been more divided than on its merits. The author himself, by leaving it unfinished, seems to have admitted the justice of the sentence which condemned it, as a dangerous attempt to give an air of refinement to sensuality.

In 1800 he began to lecture on philosophy at Jena, and was greatly admired. In 1802, he gave lectures on philosophy in Paris, and devoted himself with great assiduity to the study of the southern and oriental tongues. In 1808 he published his work, *Uber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (on the language and wisdom of the Indians.) He also studied the old French romances, and published a collection of romantic poems of the middle ages. Having returned to Germany, he proceeded to Vienna, where he became Imperial Secretary at the Archduke Charles's head quarters, and contributed greatly by his proclamations to rouse the spirit of the country. Shortly after, he became a Roman Catholic. In 1820 he undertook a periodical work, called *Concordia*, with a view of reconciling the different opinions on church and state, but it did not succeed. In 1827 he gave lectures on the philosophy of life: part of them are printed, and contain a sort of popular philosophy for the higher classes. The literary revolution which was brought about by the intellectual Dioscuri, though it has left traces enough, has been rendered more obnoxious to censure by the folly of the so-called *Schlegelianer*, or Schlegelites, than by the founder of the sect himself, to whom it is impossible to deny great depth and extent of knowledge, and a polished form of statement.—(*Abridged from the Conversations-Lexicon.*)

Since I extracted the above from the *Conversations-Lexicon*, I have been favoured with the following remarks on the character and works of Friedrich von Schlegel, by Mr. Adolf Heller, a gentleman attached to the Prussian Embassy here, to whom I am glad to avow my obligations for much valuable assistance.

"Friedrich von Schlegel is one of the most distinguished of those men whose whole life is an inward conflict. His thirst after truth led him to the study of philosophy; and while his brother August Wilhelm devoted himself exclusively to the cultivation of the *form* of poetry, Friedrich occupied himself with the *matter*. His

first considerable work was the much censured *Lucinde*, a fantastic and dreamy attempt to exalt and sublimate sensual love. Traces of the study of Greek art and literature, received in a mind full of youthful enthusiasm, are frequent and obvious throughout this early production. His imagination was exalted and refined by the Greek poets and by Plato's dialogues, but this feeling was adulterated and defaced by so much of the impurity of modern times that the author failed to gain the sympathy and approbation of the public. The book was generally looked upon as dangerous.

"F. Schlegel next appeared to greater advantage in a periodical book, called the *Athenæum*, to which he, his brother, and Novalis, were the chief contributors. The origin of that æsthetico-critical school of which they may be regarded as the founders, dates from this period. Their philosophical leader was Fichte, whose *Wissenschaftslehre* (system of Philosophy) Friedrich Schlegel regarded as the *non plus ultra* of human inquiry. He called that, and the French revolution, "the two great tendencies of the age." All that was not in conformity with the maxims of this school was rejected with philosophical disdain. Even Schiller's merits were denied by its disciples. But it was against Kotzebue and Iffland, whose plays then enjoyed the most extensive popularity, that they took the field with the greatest ardour. Kotzebue sought to revenge himself in some coarse and absurd farces, in which he endeavoured to render the overstrained enthusiasm of the æsthetic school ludicrous. The Æsthetickers, however, gained a complete victory over Kotzebue, though not by their own might. They were politic enough to ally themselves with Goethe, to express the highest admiration for him, and thus to secure a portion of the universal consideration he enjoyed. It was at this time that Goethe and Schiller published the famous *Xenien* which gave the death blow to their shallow and superficial adversaries. The Schlegelites now entrenched themselves behind the former of these two illustrious poets, though they renewed their attacks upon Schiller; but this noble-minded man troubled himself not about such criticisms, and held on his simple, serene course. To him, and to the brilliant success which crowned his labours, we chiefly owe it that the critical tyranny of their school was not completely established in Germany.

"Tieck, a friend of Schlegel, was unquestionably a great and formidable member of the confederation. He endeavoured to dethrone Schiller, because he regarded Shakspeare as the sole true model in dramatic art. It is much to be regretted that a man endowed with such a high, and rich, and graceful genius should have plunged so deeply into polemical discussion.

"The æsthetico-critical school now sought and found a new

point of union. The Schlegels, Tieck, and Novalis wrote in a strain of profound admiration of the forms of Catholicism. They lauded mystical philosophy, represented the middle ages and the institutions of chivalry as the highest and most glorious form of human society, and wrote sonnets to the Virgin Mary. Friedrich Schlegel was at this time occupied with the poetical romances and troubadour songs of Provence and the south of Europe. Tieck followed his example. Though it is matter of congratulation that they did not obtain a victory over their opponents, it must be admitted that they are entitled to our gratitude for the treasures of romantic poetry which they brought into notice; and thus perhaps formed the genius of an Uhland.

"Mean while the mischief they did was great. They appear to have combined in the attempt to render Catholicism once more the reigning church; and however romantic this may sound, it is certain that Friedrich Schlegel (who was then in the Austrian service) and Tieck, adopted the Catholic faith. Novalis did not renounce Protestantism, but his tendency to mysticism in religion was favourable to the cause of his friends.

"The sound mind of the German nation repunged these pernicious vagaries; though traces of them are to be discerned in the latest philosophical writings. The pantheistical tendency of Schelling's philosophy was not opposed to this school: even Schiller unconsciously fell under the suspicion of having evinced a leaning to Catholicism in his *Marie Stuart*. Goethe, between the years 1820 and 1830, declared himself frankly and decidedly for Protestantism, and nothing remained to the Schlegels, after this abortive attempt at changing the opinions of the nation, but to betake themselves to some other field of action.

"A. W. von Schlegel devoted himself to the study of the Sanscrit language and poetry, and oriental literature generally. Friedrich wrote his "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," and shortly before his death, his *Concordia*, wherein he proceeds upon the idea of the unity of church and state.

"He was a 'conservative;' nay, more,—he would have retrograded. His predilection for the forms of the middle ages appears through every thing he did.

"Nevertheless, there is great talent in his *Concordia*, and the opposite errors and delusions of the French revolution, and of ultra liberalism, conduce very powerfully to give an advantageous colour to his side of the question.

"But the flame of his genius had now blazed up for the last time, and had brightened only to be extinguished for ever. With his physical life, his literary existence had also reached its term. He will not live, because he was not independent,—self-sustained. He never succeeded in creating any thing original

and complete. But he certainly contributed greatly to give a direction to the spirit of his age; and it is worthy of notice, that he had more in him than he gave out. The agitated and stormy period in which he lived found him too weak in *character* to maintain an erect and steadfast posture. We are of opinion, however, that he was sincerely persuaded of the rectitude of his endeavours, though perhaps his persuasion was aided by a little personal vanity, and a little ambition. The Austrian court had ennobled him, and it appears to us in every point of view lamentable that a man of his genius should have permitted himself to be regarded as a political agent."—(*Ad. H.*)

Note. 17.

I am obliged to a friend for calling my attention to the singular coincidence between the passage in the text and the following stanzas from *Don Juan*. The conversation reported by Falk passed in 1808. *Don Juan* was published in 1819. I insert it as matter of curiosity, though I entirely object to the tone of the whole passage, and to the unworthy and unappreciating mention of such names as Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge.

Canto II.

XLV.

In twice five years "the greatest living poet,"
Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
Is called on to support his claim, or show it,
Although 'tis an imaginary thing.
Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—
Was reckoned, a considerable time,
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

XLVI.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain:
"La belle Alliance" of dunces down at zero,
Now that the Lion's fall'n may rise again:

But I will fall at least as fell my hero;
Nor reign at all, or as a monarch reign;
Or to some lonely isle of Jailors go,
With turncoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.

XLVII.

Sir Walter reigned before me; Moore and Campbell
Before and after; but now grown more holy,
The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
With poets almost clergymen, or wholly;
* * * * * * * *

XLVIII.

* * * * * * * *

XLIX.

Then there's my gentle Euphues, who, they say,
Sets up for being a sort of moral me;
He'll find it rather difficult some day
To turn out both, or either, it may be.
Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway,
And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
And that deep-mouthed Bœotian, "Savage Lander,"
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

L.

John Keats, who was killed off by one critique,
Just as he really promised something great,
If not intelligible,—without Greek,
Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
Much as they might have been supposed to speak,
Poor fellow! His was an untoward fate:
'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle,
Should let itself be snuffed out by an article.

LI.

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders
To that which none will gain—or none will know
The conquerer at least; who, ere Time renders
His last award, will have the long grass grow

Above his burat-out brain, and sapless cinders.
If I might augur, I should rate but low
Their chances:—*they're too numerous, like the thirty**
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals waxed but dirty.

LII.

This is the literary lower Empire,
Where the Prætorian bands take up the matter;—
A "dreadful trade," like his who "gathers samphire,"
The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter,
With the same feelings as you'd coax a vampire.
Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,
And show them what an intellectual war is.

Don Juan, Canto XI.

Note 18.

Novalis, whose real name was Friedrich von Hardenberg, was born on the paternal estate in the Graffschaft of Mansfeld, in 1772, and died at Weissenfels, in 1801.

From his earliest years, a love of the Good and the Beautiful were instilled into him by his excellent parents. He studied philosophy at Jena, and law, at Leipsig and Wittenberg. After visiting the school of Mines at Freiberg, he was appointed director of the salt works in the electorate of Saxony. At this period he became the friend and intellectual ally of Tieck and the Schlegels. Just as he was about to be appointed to a considerable post in Thuringia, he expired in his father's house, in the arms of his friend, Friedrich Schlegel.

Uuquestionably he was a poet, in the holiest sense of the word. His knowledge was various; in law, in natural science, in the higher mathematics, and in philosophy; but poetry predominated over every thing. Soul and Fancy were mirrored in all his works, consisting, unfortunately, chiefly of fragments—mere indications of what he aimed at. All are penetrated with the holy beauty of

* This allusion and that in the next stanza are the most singular coincidences.

the Christian faith, with the mild and tolerant spirit of which he was imbued. His deep thoughts were clothed in the utmost simplicity of form. It is a great loss to our literature that his *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, the originality and beauty of which has been pointed out by his friend Tiecke, remained unfinished. Hardenberg intended, after the completion of this novel, to write six others, in which he meant to give all his views on physics, on civil life and action, on history, politics, and love. The *Lehrlinge zu Lais* is the commencement of this great series. But his genius and character were most nobly displayed in the 'Hymns to Night,' with the execution of which, too, he was best satisfied. The greater half of the second part of his works (Berlin, 1814, two vols.,) consists of fragments, in which his profound and many-sided mind speaks with the most touching tenderness. He had conceived the project of an encyclopediacal work, in which Experience and Ideas should mutually illustrate, support, and animate each other, in the various sciences.—(*Abridged from the Conversations-Lexicon.*)

No translation of any part of Novalis's works has come in my way; nor is he mentioned in Mr. William Taylor's Survey of German Poetry. A few fragments, with which I had been peculiarly struck, appeared, among others, in the New Monthly Magazine, more than two years ago. However imperfectly translated, enough of them remains to prove their great beauty, and, I fear, their distastefulness to the generality of English readers.

Many of my readers are probably acquainted with the beautiful article on Novalis which appeared in the Foreign Review, from the pen of Mr. Carlyle, to whom all lovers of German literature are so deeply indebted. The peculiar character of Mr. Carlyle's genius, tastes, and sentiments fit him to be the expositor of such men as Novalis and Jean Paul. What is darkness to the crowd would be made clear to him by the light of his own pure, noble, and unworldly spirit.

I must confess, however, that on a superficial reading of Novalis, he appeared to me to *affect* darkness. It is easy to see how unpalatable his tendency towards the Unreal must be to Goethe.

I have given no note on Tieck, because any adequate account of his genius and works would occupy too much space; and because I think he is better, though very imperfectly, known to England. As a writer of *Märchen*—Fairy Tales—he is unapproachable. His descriptions have a freshness like that of Chaucer, and his fancy is as wild and boundless as it is graceful. His devotion to Shakspeare, if too exclusive, recommends him to our national pride. He has published a trilogy of tales on the life of Shak-

speare, full of poetry, thought, and exquisite appreciation of his hero, and of the cotemporary poets, which I mean, some time or other, to translate, if it does not fall into abler hands.

I subjoin some remarks by the same hand to which I am indebted to those on Friedrich von Schlegel.

"If we venture to add any thing to the short biographical notice of this extraordinary man, we must entreat our readers to bear in mind the contents of the note on Friedrich von Schlegel. We must try above all, to conceive of German literature, as of a great living Whole. For in no country has men of genius acted upon and through each other so powerfully as in Germany;—in none have they so laboured, hand in hand, at the universal advancement and culture. Read but the correspondence of Schiller and Goethe. How does every line bespeak that they regarded it as their highest and holiest task to educate the nation,—to refine its taste, and enlarge its intelligence.

"Novalis, too regarded this as the true vocation of every poet; and this is the real reason why he plunged so deep into abstract reasonings—this is the reason why German writers generally devote themselves to criticism and æsthetics to a degree we find in no other nation. Each poet of England appears rather in the light of an isolated individual; and, with the exception, perhaps, of Pope and his cotemporaries, none of them form what can be properly called *a school*—a band of writers united to work in one direction and to one end.*

"Novalis, although a friend of the Schlegels, and forming a school with them, Tieck, and some others of less note, stood infinitely higher as *man*. His personal friendship was, therefore, devoted to a soul as pure and elevated as his own. This he found in the noble-minded Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, who has acquired so high a reputation in the *history* of philosophy.

"Their characters were, in some respects, similar. We shall give some account of the philosophical opinions which they held in common, and which were essentially incorporated in Novalis's poetry, when we come to speak more particularly of Jacobi. Suffice it to say here, that the profounder tendency given to philosophy by Jacobi and Schelling, and which may be ultimately traced up to Spinoza, was in direct and avowed hostility to the reigning school,—to those half lights which had been in fashion; and, as the best heads were numbered among its followers, the

* It seems to me that this description applies eminently to the French poets of the 18th century. The poets composing our 'Lake school' seem hardly to have worked with sufficient unity and definiteness of aim.—*Transl.*

victory must infallably have been theirs, had they not plunged, *par contrecoup*, into the opposite extreme—into a sort of philosophico-religious mysticism.

"We must acknowledge, with regret, that together with beauties and excellencies of the highest order, there is, in Novalis's works, much of this play of the imagination with whatever is picturesque and sentimental in the Christian religion, and that the element of the Wonderful, the Wild, and the Fantastic is much too predominant. This is felt by every reader of his *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*.

"Heinrich was a Minnesanger, and one of the competitors for the prize at the celebrated contest on the Wartburg. Novalis chose him for his hero, as affording an opportunity of describing, in the form of a biographical romance, the growth and development of a poetical mind. The work, however, never proceeded beyond the second volume, and is unfinished. It begins with the moment at which Heinrich quits the paternal house, and sets out on his way to Augsburg, then the centre of German opulence and civilization, in company with several merchants of substance and education. Before he reaches the city, various adventures befall him; among others, he wanders into a cave where he finds a wonderful old man, who shows him his future destiny, in a book consisting of mysterious symbolical pictures. His aspirations now become clearer and more intelligible to his own mind; his intense love for legends, his fantasies, his dreams of the blue wonderflower (*Wunderblume*) which is the object of his ceaseless and ardent longings—all tell him that he is called to be a poet.

"Arrived in Augsburg, he is received into the splendid house of the magnificent Klingshorn, who then held sway as prince of German poets. At first, the young Heinrich is enchanted by the gaiety, the pomp, and the festive splendours of the stately city; the attractive and elegant tone of society, the sports and dances; he cannot fail to admire the poetical fertility, the lightness, ease, and grace peculiar to the matured Klingshorn; yet, after a while, he feels himself a stranger and an alien in the world of pleasure. He feels that this is no place for the study of life, or for the nurture of poetry. The talents and the universality of Klingshorn appear to him too earthly, and their direction too little serious. Poetry has, to his feelings, a higher and a holier vocation. Even the captivating Mathilde, the daughter of his host, has no power to enchain him. He leaves the city, resumes his wanderings in his own visionary world, and arrives at the grand meeting on the Wartburg, where he hears the greatest poets of the time, Wolfram von Eschilbach, Walter von der Vogelweide, and Klingshorn himself, contend for the laurel. Heinrich is permitted to give some proof of his own poetical powers, which as yet do not burst

forth with victorious splendour, but rather, in a sort of warning prelude, give note of the fire and the force that lie hidden within him.

"It is not the object of this short notice to go into the details of the work. We call the attention of our readers only to what immediately conduces to our aim—the elucidation of the relation in which the youthful Heinrich von Ofterdingen stood to Klingshorn. In the contrast he draws between the matured man of the world and sovereign poet, and the dreaming youth whose merits and whose success are of a far less dazzling character, Novalis evidently represents that between himself and Goethe, whose portrait in Klingshorn is not to be mistaken. In fragments which appeared at a later period, he expressed himself more plainly and decidedly concerning Goethe, and especially in opposition to the tendency of *Wilhelm Meister*.*

"In order to give a just conception of this opposition, we must slightly touch upon some of the most important circumstances of that period of literature. Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* gave rise to a new didactic kind of novel, which under the name of *Kunst*, or *Künstler Romane* (Novels of Art, or Artist-Novels,) has been a very prevailing sort of reading in Germany up to the present time. The author takes either a fictitious or a historical personage; and, in the narrative of his life, gradually, and in accordance with his own views and maxims, developes the progress of the peculiar art to which his hero has devoted himself. We shall mention only the most remarkable of these works. Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* is justly considered as reaching beyond the sphere of these mere imaginary portraits of the life and genius of an artist. It was by no means the design of the great poet, (as was long erroneously imagined,) to pourtray the progress of a young man in the dramatic art. The mistake of the public was,

* I find among the scraps, from which those alluded to above were selected, the following. I remember suppressing it, because I thought it not fair to Goethe to give it without explanation; and because I did not agree with the author. It will be seen that the author uses the word *atheism* in a different and much wider sense than it bears among us.

"Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship is, in a certain sense, thoroughly prosaic and modern. The Romantic is completely levelled in it—so is the poetry of nature, the Wonderful. The book treats only of the ordinary affairs of men; Nature and the Mysterious (*Mysticismus*) are utterly forgotten. It is a poeticized, civic and domestic story; the Wonderful in it is expressly treated as fiction and enthusiastic dreaming (*Schwärmerei*.) Artist-like atheism is the spirit of the book. The economy is worthy of note, with which it produces a poetical effect, by means of cheap, prosaic stuff."—*Transl.*

however, pardonable, since a large portion of the book relates to the drama; but in the last volume, the author dismisses that topic, and here the grand aim of the book comes to light. Goethe meant to describe the *general* growth and ripening of a youth of talent into *Man*. His passion for the drama is only a transition state, and brings him no permanent satisfaction. His education for Life, for free and active exertion in a higher field, is the true end.

"The school of Tieck and Novalis were displeased with this. They thought that the poet who had given hints and glimpses of such grandeur of conception ought to have ended his work in something more than the education of an accomplished man of the world. The object seemed to them too earthly; and Novalis, who was far too fastidious, reserved, and high-minded a person to engage in a paper war, expressed his disapprobation of the tendency of the book (both as a matter of philosophical speculation and of religious feeling) only in short but significant hints.

"His *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is, in every line, a mirror of his own child-like character. But his pure, beautiful, and enthusiastic nature, however noble and engaging it may appear, belonged too little to this world, and was not qualified to grasp the many-sided, giant mind of Goethe.

"Tieck selected for the subject of his *Kunstroman* the education of a painter. Franz Sternbald is a young German painter, who grows up under the pure influence of German art—of the works of Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Kranach, &c. He then goes to Italy, where he admires the richer and more gorgeous creations of the *aureo secolo*, and revels, for a while, in an Italian atmosphere of warmth and beauty. This novel, like *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, is unfinished. Tieck breaks off the thread of the story in Italy; but the reader is led so conjecture that Franz Sternbald, sated with the luxuriant beauty of the south, will return to the bosom of German simplicity, and recognise the cultivation of the severer graces as the true, holy vocation of Art.

"The *Kunstroman* assumed another form after the appearance of Goethe's *Tasso*, and a host of imitators wrote *Künstlerdramen* (lives of artists in a dramatic form.) Among the most celebrated are Ohlenschläger's *Coreggio** and Immerman's *Petrarca*. The other numerous attempts are scarcely worthy of notice.

"We may be permitted to add two extracts, which charac-

* An account of the delicate and touching beauties of this tragedy, accompanied with excellent translations, appeared in Blackwood's Magazine, which has contained so many admirable articles on German literature. I think, but am not certain, that the whole was not translated.—*Transl.*

terize Novalis's turn of mind, and show that Art was, with him, an object of holy earnestness.

"'In youth we read history from curiosity alone, as we would an amusing story. In riper age we regard her as a heavenly, consoling, and instructive friend, who softly prepares our way to a higher and more extensive career by her wise converse, and makes us acquainted with the unknown world by means of intelligible symbols. The Church is the dwelling-house of history' (here Novalis's religious feelings break out,) 'and the quiet church-yard her symbolical flower-garden. History should be written only by old and God-fearing men, whose own history is at an end, and who have nothing farther to hope than their transplantation into that garden. And their description would not be dark or gloomy; much rather would *a ray from the cupola* show every thing in the most just and beautiful light, and the Holy Spirit would move upon the face of these strangely troubled waters.'"

"'Poetry must, especially, be pursued as a *severe* art. As mere pleasure—amusement—it ceases to be poetry. A poet must not wander about idly all day long, hunting for images and for sensations. That is the wholly perverted way. A pure open spirit, a habit of reflection and of observation, and skill in putting all his powers into a reciprocally quickening activity, and in holding them therein,—such are the qualities demanded of a poet.'"—

(*Ad. H.*)

Note 19.

Goethe here alludes to Ernst Schulze (b. 1789,) author of the *Cecilie*, the *Bezauberte Rose* (Enchanted Rose,) and other poems, the former of which was conceived in the first agony of his grief at the loss of the beautiful and amiable girl of that name, to whom he was entirely devoted. She died in 1813, at the age of eighteen. The feeling of his loss seems never to have abandoned him for an instant; every thing he did had reference to her, and even his patriotic enthusiasm was mingled with devotion to her memory. An account of Schulze's character and poems appeared in the Foreign Quarterly Review,—as also one

chiefly taken from it, with due acknowledgement, in Mr. Taylor's third volume. Schulze took arms as a volunteer, in 1814. I cannot resist the temptation to copy, from the article in question, the following beautiful translation of a little poem of his, written on that occasion, which compelled him to suspend the labours he had consecrated to the memory of Cecilie:

"Steeds are neighing, swords are gleaming,
Germany's revenge is nigh,
And the banners brightly gleaming,
Wave us on to victory.

Rouse thee, then, fond heart, and see
For a time thy task forsaken;
Bear what life hath laid on thee,
And forget what it hath taken."

Goethe's mention of this unfortunate young poet may appear hard and unfeeling. But it ought to be borne in mind, that Goethe strongly disapproved and systematically discouraged, this abandonment of the mind to one set of impressions—this entire loss of the equipoise (*Gleichgewicht*,) of which we constantly find him speaking with admiration and reverence, as the consummation of the character of Man, and which it was the effort of his whole life to acquire and to maintain. He had passed through the Wertherian and many other states, and no one regarded that condition of the human mind with less respect. He, too, who was the most objective of poets (except, perhaps, Shakspeare,) might be expected to view with some impatience the intensely subjective scheme of Schulze's poems.

Schulze died of consumption, in 1817. His works have had no permanent influence on German literature.

Note 20.

I have received from Germany a little memoir of this admirable woman, and one of her husband, Duke Karl August, by Chancellor von Müller, of Weimar, for whose memoir of Goethe

(*Goethe in seiner praktische Wirksamkeit*) I am indebted to the kindness of Frau von Goethe. I thought them too long and too considerable for notes, and have subjoined them in the third volume.

Note 21.

Duke Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand of Braunschweig, born in 1735, eldest son of the reigning Duke Karl, and of a sister of Frederic the Great. He early displayed a thirst for glory, which the example of his uncle served to render more intense. The seven years' war afforded him the first opportunity of distinguishing himself, and justified the expression of Frederic, "that Nature had formed him for a hero." He married the Princess Augusta of Wales. As he had early learned the condition of his country, and the continual embarrassments of his father had read him a useful lesson, he laid down to himself rules of the severest economy, and lived retired from public affairs, and devoted chiefly to art and science. He succeeded his father in 1780, and entered on the duties of his office with earnestness and activity. He diminished the expenses of the court, discharged a part of the public debt, and attempted many things for the education and advantage of his people—not always with the best success. In 1787, he took the command of a Prussian army destined to reinstate the Stadtholder of Holland. This campaign was so quickly and easily terminated, that it gained him, perhaps, more fame than it deserved, and led to exaggerated expectations of his success in the disastrous enterprize against the armies of the French revolution. He was appointed commander of the Austrian and Prussian troops; and, in 1792, published that celebrated manifesto which had been drawn up in very violent language by a Frenchman named De Limon. The Emperor Francis and the King of Prussia approved it, but the Duke thought the expressions too strong. The bitterest were struck out; the Prussian General, Legationsrath von Renfner, arranged the whole, and the Prussian envoy at Mainz, Herr von Stein, had it printed. The consequences are well known.

In 1794, he resigned his command, and from that time till 1806, devoted himself entirely to the improvement of his country. His

edict concerning schools, bearing that date, is a model for all rulers. At an advanced age, when he might without reproach have withdrawn from the toils of war, he undertook burdens which surpassed his strength. He once more took the command of the Prussian army. The disparity between his moral and physical powers was fatally proved at the battle of Jena and Auerstadt.

Mortally wounded, he was obliged to quit his paternal soil, and breathed his last at Ottensen, near Altona, November, 1808. This unfortunate prince undoubtedly misunderstood his own powers. He lived in times long gone by.

But his character as a ruler is without reproach; his greatest enemies cannot deny that his government was most beneficent. The want of unity of will, which showed itself in many of the acts of his life, was probably the cause of the failure of some of his benevolent designs. His subjects reproached him with partiality for the French, which he had contracted from his uncle, and which he bitterly expiated.—(*Abridged from the Convers.-Lex.*)

Note 22.

Lucas Kranach's real name was Sünder. Like many of the Italian artists, he took the name of his birthplace, Kranach, or Kronach, in the Bishoprick of Bamberg. He was born in 1472, one year after the birth of Albrecht Dürer.

His father was a model-maker and illuminator; from him he learnt some of the mechanical part of his art. He early went to Koburg, where Friedrich the Wise, Elector of Saxony, founder of the university of Wittenberg, discovered his talents and took him home to his court. He accompanied him on his journey to the Holy Land in 1493, and from that time began his career as historical painter. In 1504, he was appointed court-painter to the elector and to his brother, Duke Johann Friedrich, and was ennobled by them. In 1537, he was chosen Bürgermeister of Wittenberg. Johann Friedrich, who had succeeded to the electorate, and had joined the alliance of Protestant princes against the Emperor Charles V., was taken prisoner at the battle of

Mühlberg. Charles treated him with great severity, and delivered him over to a military tribunal composed of Italians and Spaniards, with Alba at their head. He was condemned to death, and only preserved his life by the renunciation of his electoral dignity and hereditary estates. In spite of these concessions, he was thrown into prison at Innspruck. At the seige of Wittenberg, which took place shortly after the battle of Mühlberg, Charles is reported to have testified his admiration for the genius and works of Lucas Kranach, and to have promised him any favour he might ask. Kranach fell on his knees and besought him to liberate his captive master. This was, however, more than the emperor thought fit to grant, and the faithful painter then entreated to be allowed to share his captivity, which he did till its termination. At the capitulation of Wittenberg, after five years of imprisonment, Johann Friedrich was allowed to return to Saxony, but with the loss of his electoral dignity and the greater part of his dominions, which Prince Moritz, the illustrious champion of Protestantism, had transferred to the Albertinian line of Saxony. The Ernestinian line retained little but the Thuringian part of its possessions. Of this, Weimar was the capital, and became in consequence the residence of the duke. The houses of Sachsen-Weimar, Gotha, Meiningen-Hilburghausen, Altenburg, and Koburg-Gotha are all branches of the Ernestinian line. Johann Friedrich died within two years from his liberation, and his faithful follower one year after.

He lies buried in the church belonging to the palace of Weimar. The curious blunder of the stone engraver, who has inscribed his tomb *Pictor celerrimus*, instead of *celeberrimus*, is almost justified by the number of his works scattered over the galleries and collections of Germany. Some of these, however, may probably be more justly ascribed to his son, who bore the same name, and was a worthy pupil of his father. The works of Kranach are distinguished by accurate drawing, truth of expression, fidelity to nature, delicacy of touch, and by extraordinary brilliancy and beauty of colouring, which three centuries have not impaired. Kucas, like his great cotemporary Albrecht Dürer, had the truth, vigour, and deep feeling of nature which characterize genius.

The most valuable of his portraits are those of his friends Luther and Melancthon, whose faith he, as well as his unfortunate master, had adopted. There is a celebrated altar-piece by him, in a church at Weimar, and also at Wittenberg. The former was restored by Meyer, in 1806. A work, *Uber den Leben und die Werke Lucas Kranachs*, was published at Bamberg in 1821.

There is a collection of miniature portraits, painted in water

colours on parchment, which the painter called his album (*Stammbuch.*) In 1797 Chancellor and Prince von Hardenberg bought this interesting book out of the collection of Hofrath Lämmermann, of Anspach, and presented it to King Freidrich Wilhelm II. The gift reached him in his last illness, and was neglected and forgotten. It was not till 1812 that it was found and brought into notice, at Berlin, by Herr von Mechel. The heads have a singular air of life; they are as follows:—1. Our Saviour. —2. Friedrich III. surnamed the Wise, Elector of Saxony.—3. His successor, Johann Friedrich, surnamed the Magnanimous.— 4. Johann Ernst, Duke of Koburg.—5. Martin Luther.—6. Philip Melancthon.—7. Justus Jonas.—8. Johann Bugenhagen.—9. George Spalatin.—10. Lucas Kranach himself, as he appears in the altar-piece at Weimar, standing beneath the Cross of Christ. Short notices of these personages, so celebrated in the history of the Reformation, and autographs of the four Doctors of Theology, are annexed.—(*Abridged from the Conversations-Lexicon.*

This *Stammbuch* was published at Berlin in 1814. A copy of it is in the possession of a friend of mine in this country.

Note 23.

The following notice of Kleist is extracted from the preface to Tieck's edition of his works, published at Berlin in 1826. I eagerly avail myself of the opportunity of gracing my little compilation with something from the hand of a poet whose rich and graceful fancy has so peculiar and so enchanting a character. His judgment of the unhappy Kleist has all the candid indulgence and tenderness which become a man of such genius

"Heinrich von Kleist was born in 1776, at Frankfurt on the Oder. In his fifteenth year he entered the guards at Berlin as *Junker* (esquire, *i. e.* son of a noble house.) He diligently employed his leisure hours, and particularly cultivated his talents for music, which were considerable. He served in the Rhenish campaign. After peace was concluded, he was dissatisfied with his situation in garrison at Potsdam, and asked for his discharge, that he might have leisure and opportunity for study. The king,

who took an interest in him, would have given him unlimited leave of absence; but this could not satisfy the impatient Kleist. He wanted to be a free man, and to devote himself exclusively to science. He again requested his discharge, and received it.

"As his early destination was a military life, it was natural that when, in his twenty-third year, he returned to Frankfurt on the Oder, to study at the university, he should find himself far before most of his fellow students in experience and reflection, but as much behind them in the requisite preliminary acquirements. This put him out of humour, and his hasty spirit tried to overleap every obstacle by which he felt cramped and impeded. His most earnest wish was now to become a useful servant of the state, and, after various plans, he was at length employed in the department of the Minister, Struensee.

"But his mind became more and more restless and perturbed. It is natural that most *autodidactoi* should estimate much too highly what they have learned in their peculiar chance, and hasty manner. It is just as intelligible that, at other moments, when knowledge and study do not give them that tranquil satisfaction which softly enlarges and imperceptibly enriches our souls, they should feel deep disgust and contempt for all knowledge, all thoughts, and all study; and should exaggerate the advantages of a visionary and impossible state of nature, over one of the highest culture and refinement. Kleist now devoted himself to the study of the Kantian philosophy with great zeal, but with a mind neither fitted by nature nor by previous training for such inquiries. The effect could only be unfavourable. He became more arrogant and exacting, without being at all more inwardly sure and steadfast. He now fancied it his duty to free himself from all public employment, and to live only for the highest science. He thought it a degradation to be a servant of the state, and to be hindered by his office from following his most sacred vocation—the culture of his own mind. His restlessness and passionate discontent became so great, that it was his most ardent wish to alter his situation at any price,—follow what might. As the equipoise of his mind was utterly destroyed, the most romantic plans seemed to him rational and good. He would go to France, and there—himself yet a learner—teach and disseminate the Kantian philosophy, instruct the French in the German language, and the like.

"With these notions, in the spring of 1801, he set out on a long journey, with the feelings of one released from prison. His sister accompanied him. He embarked in considerable expenses, fully persuaded that this expedition would make him a matured and useful man, and reward his present sacrifices tenfold. He visited Dresden, Leipzig, and Göttingen, and went down the

Rhine from Mainz to Colln. On the Rhine he encountered a storm which threatened the destruction of the boat. His reflections, in a letter to a friend, on the near prospect of death, betray a diseased mind. In this state he reached Paris in the month of July. He was introduced to several men of science by the distinguished Alexander von Humbold; but in a short time, his eagerness to come thither, and his whole scheme, appeared to him like a delirium, and the physical sciences, which he imagined he came to study, were the objects of his contempt and aversion.

"At the close of the year, spite of all the remonstrances of his more judicious sister, he was fully resolved, as he thought, to take the small remnant of his property, which he had not consumed in this wild project, to Switzerland; buy a cottage and field, and live and die a peasant. He escorted his sister as far as Frankfurt on the Maine, and then actually proceeded to Bern, with a view of choosing his future residence. He lived for some time in perfect solitude on the lake of Thun, and here first employed himself in poetry. But his spirit, long excited and perturbed, and labouring at his destruction, threw him on a bed of sickness. His sister returned to him, nursed him, and accompanied him back to Germany.

"In 1802, Kleist went to Weimar, where Wieland received the young poet with paternal kindness. Kleist remained for a considerable time an inmate of his house, and worked under his counsels at his *Familie Schroffenstein*. From Weimar he went to Dresden, and re-wrote his favourite tragedy, Robert Guiscard, which he had twice destroyed in disgust. Here he became acquainted with a man of remarkable and firm character, to whom he strongly attached himself, and who seems to have had considerable influence over him. They travelled together in Switzerland and the north of Italy, and returned by Lyons to Paris. The morbid state of his mind often displayed itself on the road. He was sometimes sunk in the deepest and most unaccountable gloom. In Paris this conflict of his soul ended in an entire rupture with his friend. In despair of himself, and of the world, he burned all his papers, and thus a third time destroyed a tragedy he had worked out with such partial affection. From Paris he went to Boulogne, but was soon seized with a longing for his native country, and hastened homewards. In Mainz he was attacked by a malady which threatened to prove fatal, and detained him there six months.

"On his recovery he returned to Potsdam, and was again employed in the finance department. There he found the friend with whom he had quarrelled. They were quickly reconciled, and, with renewed zest, he turned to his poetic labours. In the

course of a conversation in which he was entreating his friend to write a tragedy himself, the latter related to him the story of Kohlhaas, whose name is still borne by a bridge near Potsdam, and whose memory yet lives among the people. The incident affected Kleist, and he wrote the novel which is found among his tales.

"War had now broken out. After the battle of Jena every body fled from Berlin, and he repaired with the rest to Königsberg. His patriotic affections, and his intense hatred of the enemies of his country, now made him extremely unhappy: he secluded himself from all his friends and acquaintances, gave up his post, and remained shut up in his room without seeing anybody. At this time he wrote "The Broken Pitcher" (*Der zerbrochene Krug*) and translated Molière's *Amphytrion*, probably for amusement. During the war, he and his friend returned to Berlin. By what means he incurred the suspicions of the French authorities, I know not; but he was sent to Joux, and lay for half a year in the same prison which had enclosed the celebrated Toussaint l'Ouverture. From thence he was conveyed to Chalons. In the loneliness of imprisonment he wrote a great deal.

"On his liberation, he repaired to Dresden, to live entirely for study. He wrote his *Penthesilea*, finished *Kohlhaas* and most of his other tales, and wrote his *Käthchen von Heilbronn*.

"The state of Germany,—her gloomy and threatening future,—depressed every man who loved his fatherland. This feeling,—rage at the insolence of the stranger,—grief at the want of unanimity among princes and people, and at the weakness which resulted from it,—took complete possession of the poet's mind; all his powers were lost in hate of the oppressor. In this state he wrote *Hermann*.

"In 1809, the war against France broke out; all his hopes revived. He wrote his ode *Germania*, and went to Prague in the hope of aiding the good cause by his pen. Fragments were found among his papers, which proved his eagerness to arouse and to unite Germany, and to show the falsehood and the machinations of the enemy in their true light.

"From Prague he intended to go to Vienna, but the French army was already there; and during the battle of Aspern he was not far from the scene of action. He returned to Prague, and had another severe illness, which detained him for a long time.

"When peace was concluded, and all hope of the liberation of his country apparently at an end, he returned to his native land, and lived in Berlin. His family wished him to endeavour to get employment again, but he vehemently refused. He edited a weekly paper, the *Abendblätter*, corrected and finished his tales,

and wrote his *Prinz von Homburg*, unquestionably his most mature and perfect work.

"In the year 1811 occurred the last scene of his melancholy history—too early for him and for literature, to which a higher and more enlarged culture would have enabled him to render far more valuable service. By his voluntary death, his country lost one of her noblest sons, just before her regeneration and the annihilation of those circumstances which preyed upon his mind.

"If we read these few details of his life with attention, and compare them with the feelings which all his works excite in our minds, more or less, we see distinctly that the poet was not in unison with himself;—that neither in reality nor in art, could he find that happiness and serenity which are indispensable to production, and absolutely necessary to the bearing of the calamities and the joys of life. Seeds of this deep dissonance, this fierce conflict, which threaten life itself, sleep, indeed, in the minds of most men. Common men, however, are not oppressed and agitated by these contradictions in their nature—or, at least, not for long. Youthful discontent and restlessness are calmed down by some ordinary traditional calling, by the usages of the world, and by every-day employments and pleasures: on the contrary, the early histories of men who are led to science by inward impulse and enthusiasm, but more especially of poets and artists, have in them some thing remarkable, and yet all somewhat resembling, because all have, more or less, to contend with that melancholy which the contradictions of the ordinary world, and the unacquaintance with their own inward nature, produces. Generally speaking, a kinder destiny bestows that elastic spirit which lightens the wanderer's steps over these rocks; or the sicknesses of the fancy are healed by the fancy; or the lofty countenances of Nature, Religion, and Philosophy calm the beating heart; and it is granted to the Artist to live wholly, and with full soul, for his Art; so that he comprehends the world and all its shows out of his inward sense; and life and its incidents refresh his spirit with ever-varying forms.

"But sometimes fate permits that the spirit should never find its resting place; that it should weary itself in struggles after the Better; that it should wrestle, alternately, with conceit and with despondency of itself, and, in chill disappointment and diseased susceptibility, understand neither itself nor others; such are the hypochondriacal spirits, who, allured by art and science, like Tantalus, thirst at the well-head of life. Seldom, however, does Nature show the cruel caprice by which talent, inclination, and character are involved in that fearful and confused strife which ends in self-destruction. And, among these rare instances,

few so strongly claim our pity, our respect, and our sympathy, as Heinrich von Kleist.

"Living in most agitated times, it was impossible to his strong heart not to feel the pressure of the Present, in all its force. He was wholly German. The times flitted before him, like a spectre, so that he had no power to look steadily and with a clear eye on the Future. He brooded over the gloomy picture, till it haunted him like a frightful dream. Poetry was only a momentary balm to his troubled spirit—it brought no healing. The unhappy poet could not live in her, and there find peace; the Present darkened even *her* radiant face, and she was unable to brighten the outer world with her mild lustre. His frequent attacks of illness were probably the consequence of these mental agitations.

"He could not find the place in life which suited him; and, with him, fancy had no power to indemnify for the loss of the Actual. And though he could not utterly despair of his genius, the small account taken of his works by a public which gave its favour to writers so every way his inferiors, must have disgusted and disheartened him.

"His sudden voluntary death was a severe shock to all his friends, as well as to all those who honoured his genius and his noble character. Shortly before his death, he had destroyed all his papers. A long essay, containing the history of the inward workings of his mind, must have been singularly interesting.

"The editor became acquainted with him in 1808, at Dresden.

"Heinrich von Kleist was of middle size, and strongly built. He was grave and silent—no trace of obtrusive vanity, but many marks of noble pride, appeared in his aspect and demeanour. He struck me as having some resemblance to the pictures of Torquato Tasso, and had, like him, a slight thickness in his utterance."

I subjoin to this biographical sketch some remarks on Kleist's works, which are little known in this country. My readers will recognise the same friendly and able hand to which I am already so largely indebted.

"Heinrich von Kleist is little known out of his own country —yet, without being a star of the first magnitude, he deserves to be attentively considered, for the characteristic merits of his works, and even for his irregular wanderings on a path which, after him, was trodden by several men of considerable dramatic talent. His early and tragical death renders him one of those imperfect creations which rather give indications of the presence

of high powers, than display their thorough and complete development. The foregoing notice will have shown the unsettled, changeful, and broken character of his life. It has been seen how he retired from a military life, disgusted by its uniformity and constraint; how he then threw himself with ardour, nay, with a sort of voracity, into science; a choice which his restless temperament rendered no less unfortunate. He had thus no station, no place, in social life; this incessantly tormented him; the more, since his poetical works, in spite of all the talent they display, remained unnoticed; or rather, people (absurdly enough) thought them half antiquated, because they were composed of two elements, one of which, indeed, belonged to past times—the German knightly romances; the second, and far more remarkable (namely, a blind, relentless Fatalism,) owes its rise chiefly to him, though afterwards employed by others. It may be regarded as the prototype of the peculiar turn the German drama took after Schiller's death.

"The whole of this portion of German dramatic literature, (although from the year 1810 it has formed the reigning school,) is so little known in England, and so entirely alien from the spirit of the English drama, that it will be difficult to make ourselves intelligible in speaking of it.

"We will try, however, to give at least a faint idea of it. Schiller possessed the rarest qualities of mind, and took Shakspeare as a model; but his philosophy, and the civilization of his age, rendered him incapable of the simple, vast conceptions of the English bard: his knowledge of history, however, and still, more, his penetration into the psychological qualities of individual characters in history, was unequalled. Thus endowed, he went on his own way, undisturbed by the clamours of schools, or by the vagaries or suggestions of critics. He followed after the Highest with singleness of mind and noble passion—and he reached it. His aim and plan were cosmopolitan, and he fulfilled them with such brilliant success, that his works belong not to his country, but to the world. But this cosmopolitanism drew upon him, in the midst of all his popularity, the disapprobation of those who continually required of the German drama something national or patriotic. Goethe had broken free from this exclusive German school long before Schiller, and had turned to antique models. The stage was thus left to talents of an inferior order. There was no one gifted with the power of drawing from the national history any thing like Shakspeare's plays on the wars of the Roses. It must therefore be something new—peculiar; and, as the Romantic, the Wonderful, the Mysterious, ever exercised a singular sway over German minds, this was the most obvious instrument to try. On this field, Shakspeare's lofty simplicity

could no longer serve as a model. Criticism, therefore, pointed to Calderon, placing his most perfect pieces in the foreground; such as *La vida es sueña*, and *El principe constante*, which obtained great popularity in Germany. An ill-understood piety, and an exaggerated admiration of the middle ages, came into fashion. Poems and romances idealized those times in which Germany was so great and so flourishing; in short, a dissatisfaction with the present, a looking back, a vague discontent, got possession of the public mind,—a state of things which may give birth to considerable, but never to pure, works of art.

"Such were the times in which Kleist lived and wrote. Of lyrical talent he gave no proof whatever; and this must always awaken some doubt whether the true poetic vocation existed. He began with works which are rather romances in dialogue than genuine dramas; they are very like German romances of chivalry. The *Familie Schroffenstein* is a production of this kind. It cannot be denied that there are single scenes of great beauty; but what a tasteless and injudicious use of a Fatalism justified neither by the example of Calderon, nor of the ancients! This modern Fate knows no atonement by death; no deliverance, no elevation in the catastrophe, like that of the Greeks. It is a hideous family-spectre, that snatches greedily at life, and, without any psychological truth, destroys it. We have no scruple in expressing this unfavourable judgment, because Kleist afterwards showed he had the power to do better things. Tieck has suffered himself to be led too far in his defence of the national school, when he commends this play. Perhaps, however, he looked more at the growth of the poet's mind than at the individual work.

"Kathchen von Heilbronn is not wholly free from this offensively spectral and fatalist character, which, here springs out of the circumstance of unlawful birth, and thus inextricably entwines itself about the heroine; so that the crime which seems to provoke the wrath of Destiny does not proceed out of the mind or heart of the individual, but is a dark invisible power, extraneous to her, yet by which she is resistlessly hurried along. Kathchen's character, her love for the knight, are exquisitely simple and beautiful. The unalterable tenderness with which she follows him, spite of his neglect and scorn, and the patience with which she endures the most humiliating treatment from him, are most touchingly expressed, but we cannot deny that the conception appears to us revolting and untrue. For if she really loved him, his will must be her law, and she would quit him. The poet, however, makes it appear as if she were hurried on without any participation of her will; as if she followed him almost unconsciously. The part the knight has to play is, of course, strange

enough; and, when it comes to light that Kathchen is daughter of the emperor, her destiny is fulfilled, and she dies a voluntary, or rather passive, victim;—not from high resolve or tragic necessity, but led by blind fate. The explanation and atonement are, however, here laid before us, and the work give evidence of great progress in the mind of the poet.

"In the interval between this and his *chef-d'œuvre*, the *Prinz von Homburg*, he devoted himself to the study of comedy, which had a very salutary effect in bringing him nearer to nature and to truth. He made a somewhat idealized version of Molière's *Amphitryon*. It is probable that his acquaintance with Shakspeare disgusted him with the monotony of French comedy, in which the plot is all in all. Jupiter and Alcmene are, in Kleist's representation, noble creations, instead of being mere persons of a comedy. In Kleist's work, a deeper idea lies beneath the transformation of Jupiter into the form of the husband; while the high and graceful tone of the dialogue, and the simple delineation of the conjugal relation, are strikingly poetical. We must, indeed, agree with Tieck, that he has produced something quite different from Molière's play; but what else could be expected from a self-formed poet, and a German? Can we regard it as a censure?

"Jupiter thus reproaches Alcmene for loving the mortal, and forgetting the true source and creator only of the feeling itself.

——————"Ist Er dir wohl vorhanden?
Nimmst du die Welt sein grosses Werk wohl wahr?
Siehst du Ihn in der Abendröthe Schimmer,
Wenn sie durch schweigende Gebüsche fällt?
Hörst du Ihn beim Gesäusel der Gewässer
Und bei dem Schlag der üpp'gen Nachtigall?
Verkündet nicht umsonst der Berg Ihn dir?
Der felszerstäubten Katarakten Fall?
Wenn hoch die Sonn' in seinem Tempel strahlt
Und von der Freude Pulsschlag eingelautet
Ihn alle Gattungen Erschaffner preisen—
Steigst du nicht in des Herzens Schacht hinab
Und betest deinen Götzen an?"

Amphytrion, Act. ii. Sc. 5.

TRANSLATION.

"Is He, indeed, present to thee?
Takest thou due note of the world, his great work?

See'st thou Him in the red glow of evening,
When it falls amid the silent thickets?
Hearest thou Him in the gush of the waters,
And in the song of the lovelorn nightingale?
Doth not the mountain proclaim Him to thee, in vain?
The roar of the rock-foamed cataract—in vain?
When the sun beams high in his temple,
And, attuned by the pulse-stroke of joy,
All creatures praise their creator,
Dost thou not descend into the mine of thine own heart,
And there worship thine idol?"

"These are indeed things of which Molière never dreamed. We give this character only as characteristic of that metaphysical tone which the German poet loves to infuse into every thing.

"The farce of "The Broken Pitcher" (*Der zerbrochene Krug*) has breadth, drollery, and true comic vigour; but it has the fault of most English productions of the same kind—it is spun out.

"In almost all his novels (among which *Kohlhaas** has been mentioned) we find the same remarkable character, to which we have before alluded, of a mysterious Destiny, expressed in dim forebodings,—crushing, not elevating. The dark form of the curse rises continually before our eyes; yet the delineation itself is ever masterly, simple, impressive, and dramatic, even in the narrative form. Indeed, two of these tales were dramatized in Germany with considerable success. *Kohlhaas* by Maltilz, and the *Befreiung auf St. Domingo*, under the title *Toni*, by the celebrated Körner,

"We must conclude with his great work, the *Prinz von Homburg*.

"As we cannot presume on a general acquaintance with the story among English readers (a circumstance which greatly enhances the difficulty of our task) we must endeavour to bring it before them, as well as we can, by illusion. The incident on

* It is probable that the strong political bias conspicuous in this most remarkable and interesting tale rendered it unpalatable to Goethe. For vigorous and affecting simplicity, dramatic effect, vivid air of truth, and profound moral interest, it may however, I think, stand the comparison with any work of imagination extant. The introduction of something of supernatural agency seems to me its only defect; but that might be detached without injury to the integrity of the narrative. It is totally unlike any story I know in German, and has the matter-of-fact tone, the rapid march, and the moral and political tendencies of an English one.—*Transl.*

which it is founded has the nearest resemblance to that which formed the ground-work of an English play, in no other way worthy to be mentioned with Kleist's—the first remarkable exploit of Captain Churchill (afterwards Duke of Marlborough.) His was nearly the same fortunate offence against military subordination as that of the Prussian officer, Prinz von Homburg, who, when serving under the commander Elector Friedrich of Brandenburg, at the battle of Fehrbellin, attacked the enemy contrary to orders. He gained the victory, but was ordered by the inflexible old general to be tried by a court-martial, and was condemned to death, though a prince, and nearly allied to the electoral house.

"The prince's crime, however, did not, like Churchill's, arise from a keen military glance, and a conviction that he was right, but from a romantic abstraction of mind. He loved the elector's niece, Natalia, a woman worthy of her illustrious uncle—no trembling, sensitive girl, but a resolute, heroic being. She is firmer and stronger than the prince. She resolves to save him, because she knows she is the cause of his offence. She visits him in prison. He cannot believe that the elector really intends to put him to death. His life hitherto has been a happy dream of love; he is suddenly awakened to this fierce reality—he must die;—in the bloom of youth, in the pride of victory—won indeed by an error, but still won by him. He cannot believe it. But when he is at length convinced of the inflexible determination of the elector—he shrinks and trembles. This scene is infinitely beautiful—infinitely true. He is not ashamed to beg for pardon—he clings to life,

"Wie ein Kindlein an der Mutter Brust."*

—in vain. This very supplication for life appears to the dauntless elector unmanly.

"His situation is rendered worse, and his fate apparently inevitable, by the enthusiasm of all the officers of the army in his favour. They present an urgent petition, signed by all the principal officers, and by the princess, who is herself head of a dragoon regiment. Till now, the elector has in fact regarded the affair only as a necessary show of rigour. But now that his officers speak to him in a tone almost of menace, he becomes in earnest. He regards their remonstrance as an offence against the laws, and an act of mutiny against himself. He thought he

* Like an infant to its mother's breast."

possessed the implicit confidence of his army, he finds it opposed to him on a question of justice.

"The prince's death now seems to him duty, necessity. Princess Natalia knows her iron uncle, and sees that all is lost. Flight is the only resource. Meanwhile the prince has heard of the indiscreet zeal of his friends; he feels that they are wrong, and sees that the authority of government totters if he does not support it. He scorns the proffered escape, censures the conduct of the officers towards their sovereign, and is convinced that his *voluntary* death can alone atone for all these offences. He announces his resolution to the elector, and now prays for death more urgently than before for life. He thus fulfils the will of the veteran chief, and is pardoned.

"One singular feature of this drama is, that the opening and closing scenes are nearly alike, and form, if I may so speak, a colassal rhyme. At the close, the prince is crowned as victor, in reality, as, in the first scene in the castle garden in the night before the battle, he is in a dream. The poet thought by this fantastic fore-shadowing of the future, to give his work a poetical charm, of which it stood in no need. He rests so firmly on truth and nature,—he is so simple and so national,—the character of the elector, the intrepid hero, the rigorously just ruler, full of paternal feeling for his people, is so perfect,—that the work must disarm the most prejudiced criticism; and gives assurance that Kleist would have reached the highest point of his art, had not his career been cut short by his lamented death.

"At the beginning of this note we spoke of Kleist as the founder of the fatalist school of tragedy. We must by no means be understood as classing him with such writers as Müllner or Grillparzer, men who worked only for theatrical effect. Kleist is advantageously distinguished from them in *form*. His versification is inartificial—some times even harsh; and his language natural and simple. Müllner, Grillparzer, *&c.* on the contrary, labour to tickle the ear with rhymes, *à la* Calderon. With these playwrights, who speak only in trochaics, Kleist has nothing in common. It is only to be regretted that he was infected with that morbid taste for the introduction of a boding and inexorable Fate, which was a disease of his times."—(*Ad. H.*)

Note 24.

For a full and very interesting account of Lessing's life and works, I refer my readers to Mr. William Taylor's Survey of German Poetry, vol. I.; which is also enriched with his admirable translation of Nathan the Wise.

I add a short extract from the philosophical dictionary of Professor Krug, of Leipsig.

"Although this variously-gifted and accomplished man influenced his age rather as a literary and æsthetical critic than as a philosopher, and has left no comprehensive or grasping philosophical work,—for his Nathan the Wise is only a philosophico-didactic poem, in a dramatic form, and his work on the education of the human race (*Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts,*) only a striking fragment from the great mass of science—yet he powerfully stimulated the public mind by his writings, especially by his æsthetic criticism, and his polemical theology; while, by his masterly style, uniting clearness, precision, and lightness with animation and vigour, he introduced a more tasteful manner of stating the *matter* of philosophical disquisition. And for this reason, he is better entitled to a distinguished place in the history of philosophy than many philosophers by profession."—(*Allgemeines Handwörterbuch der philosophischen Wissenschaften, nebst ihre Literatur und Geschichte.*)

It will be still more to my present purpose to give some of Goethe's own opinions of Lessing. Were there a tolerably faithful translation of the *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, I should be glad to refer to that, but unfortunately the work which pretends to be a translation has scarcely a resemblance to the original, and is one of the most flagrant specimens of literary dishonesty this country has produced. It is, I believe, a bad translation of a bad French translation. That a man should be found unprincipled enough to commit such a crime against the reputation of a great author, is no matter for wonder; the melancholy, and, at the same time, ludicrous part of the business is, that any English readers should have thought themselves qualified to judge of Goethe by the perusal of it.

The *Dichtung und Wahrheit* contains some invaluable matter on the history and character of German literature. The following passage is extremely difficult to translate. In the so-called

'Memoirs of Goethe,' parts of it are wholly omitted,—others so changed as not to retain a trace of the original meaning.

"By conversations, by examples, and by reflection, I came to the conviction that the first steps by which to emerge from the watery, diffuse, and "*null*" epoch, could be no other than definiteness, precision, and brevity. In the present style of writing, it was impossible to distinguish the Mean and Common-place from the Better, because all was levelled into one universal flatness. Some writers had already begun to make head against this widespread evil, and had succeeded, more or less. Haller and Ramler were marked by nature for compression. Lessing and Wieland were led to it by reflection. The former was, severally, epigrammatic in his poems, close and terse in his *Minna*, laconic in his *Emilia Galotti;* it was not till a later period that he returned to that cheerful *naiveté* which became him so well in *Nathan*. Wieland, who had been prolix in *Agathon*, *Don Sylvio*, and his comic tales, became, in a wonderful manner, condensed and precise in *Musarion* and *Idris;* at the same time that he retained all his elegance. Klopstock, in the first cantos of the *Messiah* is not free from the charge of diffuseness; in his odes and other smaller poems he is concise; as also in his tragedies. By his constant endeavour to emulate the ancients, especially Tacitus, he became more and more compressed, till at length he grew unintelligible and unenjoyable. Gleim, diffuse, flowing, easy, by nature, scarcely attained to conciseness in his war-songs." * * * * * * * * * *

"One work, however, the genuine offspring of the seven years' war, full of perfect North-German nationality, I must mention with honour; it is the first dramatical work taken from real, significant life, specifically adapted to the times, and therefore producing an incalculable effect—I mean *Minna von Barnhelm*. Lessing, who, unlike Klopstock and Gleim, cared nothing about personal dignity, because he had full confidence in his own power of resuming and maintaining it at any moment, liked a wild, rambling sort of life, at inns and in the wide world;—he wanted some powerful counteraction to the constant and vehement labouring of his mind. This was what induced him to join General Tauentzien. It is easy to perceive that this play was written between peace and war, love and hate. This production it was, that happily afforded a glimpse of a higher, more significant world, beyond that merely literary and domestic one, in which poetry (*Dichtkunst*) had hitherto moved."*

* It is hardly necessary to say, that *Dichtkunst*, *Dichtung*, *Dicter*, are never employed by Germans in the limited sense giving to the corresponding words, *poetic-art*, *poetry*, *poet*, in this country, where

Farther on, speaking of works of art, artists and critics, he says:

"A young man, however, who hears elder men converse together on subjects already familiar to them, but with which he has only a slight and occasional acquaintance, and on whom thus rests the most difficult of tasks—that of allotting to every thing its due weight,—must needs be in a very painful situation. I, as well as others, therefore, looked around wistfully for some new light, and this was destined to come from a man to whom we were already so deeply indebted.

"There are two ways in which the mind may receive the highest contentment—by perception and by conception (*Anschauung und Begriff.*) But the former demands a worthy object, which is not always at hand, and an appropriate state of mental culture which has not yet been attained to. Conception, on the other hand, requires only a certain susceptibility to the particular class of impressions.* It brings its own contents (or objects) within itself; and is itself the instrument of culture. Every ray of light which this most admirable thinker threw upon the dark clouds that surrounded us, was, therefore, most welcome.

"One must be young to form and adequate notion of the effect which Lessing's *Laocoon*† produced upon us, inasmuch as this work bore us out of the region of barren perception into the free realms of thought. The so long misunderstood *ut pictura poesis*, was at once laid aside, the distinction between the Arts of Design (*bildende Künste*) and those of Language (*redende*,) was made clear; the summits were severed, however the bases might unite. The painter or sculptor (*der bildende Künstler*) must ever confine himself within the limits of the Beautiful; but the artist whose instrument is language (*der redende Künstler*) who cannot dispense with every variety of signification, may be permitted to range beyond them. The one works for the outward sense, which can be satisfied only by the Beautiful, the other for the imagination, which may sometimes find pleasure even in the Ugly.

"All the consequences of this acute and admirable suggestion flashed upon us like lightning; all former criticism, whether

they always include the idea of verse, and generally exclude all that is not verse.—*Transl.*

* This is a deplorable circumlocution for *Der Begriff will nur Empfänglichkeit*,—but I can find no better way of conveying the meaning.—*Transl.*

† A new translation of the whole or a part of this inimitable work has lately appeared, as I am glad to hear, in Blackwood's Magazine, from the pen of Mr. De Quincey.—*Transl.*

perceptive or judicial, was cast aside like a worn-out garment; we fancied ourselves delivered from all evil, and thought ourselves entitled to look back with pity upon that glorious sixteenth century, in which German poets and sculptors had devised no better mode of representing Life, than under the form of a fool with cap and bells, Death under that of a dry skeleton, and had invested the inevitable Evil of the world with the features of a hideous, grotesque devil.

"What most enchanted us, was the beauty of that thought of the ancients, which represented death as the brother of sleep, and gave them, as beseemed twin-brothers, the power of interchanging natures.

"Here could we loudly celebrate the triumph of the Beautiful; and though the Ugly could not be utterly driven from the world, we could banish it to the baser region of the Ludicrous.

"The grandeur, the importance of such fundamental and leading conceptions is apparent only to the mind on which they exercise their infinite activity;—is apparent only to the age in which they have been longingly waited for, in which they come forth at the fit and appropriate moment.

"Then do those who are formed to thrive upon such nutriment, delightedly employ whole periods of their lives in making it their own; they have within them the glad consciousness of a luxuriant growth; while men are not wanting who set themselves in instant opposition to such influences, nor others, who step in to quibble and cavil at thoughts so far above them.

"But as conception and perception (notion and sight) mutually aid and advance each other, I could not long work these new thoughts, without feeling an endless longing arise within me, once to behold more considerable and perfect works of art in greater number."

I am fortunate in being enabled to subjoin the following original matter.

"We may be permitted to add to the remarks which have been collected concerning this distinguished man, some in which we shall attempt to take a more general view of the character

of his writings, and to look deeper into the sphere of his literary activity.

"It appears to us that every author ought to be viewed from two distinct sides;—first, according to his productions, and secondly, according to his powers. The former are far from always affording accurate or conclusive tests of the latter. Accident, education, connexions, exercise a tyrannous influence over the mental development, and he is a very one-sided critic who looks only at the fruits, without seeking to penetrate to the inmost germ of genius.

"'Erkenne erst, mein Sohn, was er geleistet *hat*,
Und dann erkenne, was er leisten *wollte*.'*

"If we look only at the principal productions of a poet, and neglect to study *himself*, his character, and the circumstances with which he had to contend—we fall in a sort of atheism which forgets the creator in his creation.

"Lessing is one of those authors of whom no competent judgment can be formed from the reading of the works by which he is chiefly known—they would afford but a half insight into his great merits. What he did as a critic, as a philosopher, is far more—and more yet, is what he was endowed with faculties to do. An unsettled, dissipated life, the wantonness of genial power, and extraordinary vivacity of temper, stood in the way of the self-concentration requisite to accomplish great things. Thus his philosophical notions are merely fragments, because he never could submit to the toil and application necessary to reduce them to a digested system. His fragment on the Trinity, his observations and arguments on the *Wolfenbüttler Fragmente eines Unbekaunten* (Wolfenbüttel Fragments by an Unknown,) his remarks on Spinoza, prove that he was capable of a depth and comprehensiveness, far beyond the spirit and the influences of his age. These are transient glimpses which his vigour and genius enabled him to catch, but which he had not the patience or application to follow out. It is impossible, however, not to wonder at his power of preserving such depth of thought in the midst of a life devoted to external activity and enjoyment far more than to recluse meditation, and at a time, too, when the prevailing tone of so-called enlightened society was that of sceptical contempt for all religious and philosophical questions.

"His connexion with the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, who

* Ascertain first, my son, what he has produced, and then ascertain what he desired to produce.—*Goethe. Künstler's Apotheose.*

was not nearly his equal in depth and perspicacity, had in this respect the most beneficial effect upon him. He raised the noblest monument to his friend by embodying his character and virtues in his delineation of Nathan the Wise—the Ideal of pure and perfect morality.

"We must add a few words on his poetical works. And we must premise, that the philosopher so preponderates in his nature, that he is not acknowledged by his countrymen as a poet, in the genuine sense of the word. The modern critico-æsthetic school has more especially expressed this opinion.* Not that they intended by any means to depreciate his immense merits and services to literature and art. Their judgment was essentially just.

"The pure element of Art, perfectly unmixed with all didactic and philosophical ends, was unattainable to him. The only works which could possibly be quoted as exceptions, are his *Minna von Barnhelm* and *Emilia Galotti*. But in both these, especially the latter, the moral tendency and purpose is rendered very prominent. *Emilia Galotti* is Virginius and his daughter in modern costume. The seducer is no Decemvir—he is an Italian prince. The whole story thus assumes the character of a private, domestic story; and the grand and beautiful back-ground which is formed by the Roman grouping, the patriotic interest, the liberation of Rome from her tyrants, is annihilated by the change. But the plan, the progress, and development of the piece are masterly, and Lessing has produced a great work out of meagre materials. The sharpness and clearness of his delineation of character are perfect, and during the whole course of the piece he never, for a moment, becomes tame, diffuse, or tedious. This is the more extraordinary, because he cannot wholly divest himself of a rhetorical tendency. He, however, curbs it, as beseems a declared antagonist of French declamation and bombast. It was, indeed, impossible for him to do without rhetoric, because (and that is the main point) he had not that depth of poetical resource which enables an author to compensate for the absence of it—to clothe a dramatic skeleton with flesh and colour, to give it life, and to invest the whole with that musical, harmonious charm, which Shakspeare pours with such unmatched profusion over his creations.

"Lessing's merit as a dramatic writer was, a deep insight into the nature of composition, of scenic arrangement, and of the progress and conduct of a plot. On these points, no one can deny his mastership; nor can we deny him another essential quality of a dramatic writer,—knowledge of the human heart, and skill in the delineation of character. But here his power ended: his

* See Note 16, on Friedrich von Schlegel.

figures remain, spite of all these merits, somewhat frigid and inanimate; they are the offspring of reflection, of study, of calculation, of comparison, not (and that is the essential point) *not* of the imagination. Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* had a considerable, and not a favourable, influence on Schiller at the commencement of his dramatic career, as is manifest in his *Fiesco*, in which there is a good deal of declamation and tendency to *phrases*, though Schiller's richer fancy gave to his creation more of that life and warmth which carry away the reader.

"This is the point at which we can best touch upon Lessing's famous defence of Shakspeare, in answer to Voltaire. The merit which Lessing displayed in this controversy, as a critic, were alone sufficient to entitle him to immortality. The anatomical dissection of the dramatic art, the wit, the overpowering irony with which he triumphantly encounters the emptiness of the French drama, gave the first impulse to that of Germany, and were the source and spring of the elevation it afterwards attained.* This must, therefore, ever remain Lessing's highest glory.

"The task was, at the time he undertook it, one of immense difficulty; it demanded the strength of a giant. The worship of Voltaire was thoroughly established in the world of letters; people conceived in nothing beyond the French tragedians; not to believe in them was heresy and crime. Into such an arena, and before such judges, did the unknown young man, in the humble character of a theatrical critic at Hamburgh, suddenly leap with armed hand—armed with a flaming sword—with Shakspeare. He attacked all the tastes and prejudices of the age, assailed the whole majesty of the French heroes *en face*, struck their paper crowns and helmets into the dust, and pointed out to his countrymen an author of whom they were almost ignorant, as the true model of dramatic art. The outcries of his adversaries did him admirable service; they excited attention to his attacks, which every week increased in vigour. At first the public knew not what to make of it. War was proclaimed against the old idols, and the new gods were almost unknown:—but doubt, inquiry, criticism, had struck root; people began to debate, to reflect; some men of learning pointed out the wide gulf which severed the French from the Greek tragedy; Wieland translated the hitherto unknown Shakspeare; and thus was the well-fought field gradually won, and Lessing's renown, *as critic*, fixed on an immoveable basis. Yet one word still remains to be said on Lessing's defence of Shakspeare. Whether he had the power of fully appreciating him,—whether he could so much as divine *Shakspeare*

* In the *Hamburger dramaturgischen Beiträge*, a weekly paper.

the Poet, is, spite of his gallant and immortal polemic for him, still a question. Lessing was so utterly unmusical—he was so completely and purely a being of understanding and of reason—so exclusively a thinker, that it seems impossible he could have thoroughly understood Shakspeare.

"The following anecdote is very characteristic of him. Being invited to attend the performance of a musical composition of consummate beauty and genius, he quitted the room soon after it had begun, saying, 'I cannot conceive how a rational being can find pleasure in this confusion of mere sounds, which afford no matter for thought.' We will not be unjust enough to apply Shakspeare's denunciation against those who have 'no music in their souls,' to the noble-minded Lessing; that his whole life was the purest endeavour after truth is delightfully manifest in every line he wrote; but the inward melody, the acute sensibility, the tender longings, the flowery dreams, the sense of the romantic, were utterly denied him. He could, therefore, understand Shakspeare but on one side: and however exquisite was his perception of the technical and mechanical beauties of Shakspeare's magnificent compositions, it is to be regretted that he for a long while led Germany to admire, in the first of *poets*, only an unequalled knowledge of human nature, and a power of painting gigantic passions. This one-sided, distant, amazed admiration of the Gigantic in Shakspeare, was, for a considerable time, all that was felt for him. And this misapprehension of his real merit it was, which produced that host of *soi-disant* imitators in Germany, who were quite wide of the spirit of their supposed model.

"Goethe's Goetz of Berlichingen was the first visible proof of a greater approximation to an insight into Shakspeare; yet even in this, it is rude and partial. The sense of the true merit of the Great Poet was not awakened till much later. August Wilhelm von Schlegel was the man who, at the beginning of the present century, unclosed the sealed book.

"To conclude. Towards the end of his life—and this is the most beautiful close of earthly life, the fragrance that is wafted from the blossoms on the near grave—he seemed to become more tender and musical. His 'Nathan the Wise,' (though its matter and purport are certainly purely didactic and philosophical) is, of all his works, the most poetical: not because it is the only one written in verse, but from the pure idyllic tone of serene wisdom, the Bramin-like character, which breathes through it. The scope or aim (*Tendenz*) is truly prosaic, and only receives an imaginative cast from the eastern story of the three rings, on which it is founded. But in the perfection of the work, we nearly forget the purpose; and it is unquestionably his master-piece.

"The versification is flowing; and the more remarkably so,

since the author first introduced the Iambic metre into the drama. The whole breathes an oriental air,—a pure, serene, and beautiful climate. It was the song of the swan. Happy the poet who can bid farewell to the world in so harmonious a strain!"—(*Ad. H.*)

Note 25.

Friedrich Justin Bertuch, born at Weimar in 1747, was one of the contributors to the *Deutsche Mercur*. He also wrote several dramatic pieces for the court theatre of Weimar. As chamberlain, he was associated with Baron von Echt, who, having been Danish ambassador in Spain, excited in him a curiosity after Spanish and Portuguese literature, which was then little known in Germany. His translation of *Don Quixote* was, at that time of day (1775,) a remarkable performance. He also, in conjunction with others, published a Magazine of Spanish and Portuguese Literature. The *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, published at Jena, was first planned by him and Schiller. With his friend Krause, he published the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*. Bertuch was also actively instrumental in the establishment of the free school of design, over which Krause, and afterwards Meyer, presided. That his love for poetry and art suffered no decline, was proved by his plan of the *Blaue Bibliothek aller Nationen*, an invaluable collection of the Fairy Tales, well—some of them admirably—translated, with illustrative biographies and characteristics. His services to literature and art were manifold. He lost his only son, the young man afterwards mentioned by Falk, in 1815.

Note 26.

For this note I am indebted to a friend. Wherever I have received such assistance I have ventured to mark it by the initials of the contributor. The public will see how numerous my obligations are.

"Lenz was born 1750, in Liefland, or Livonia. In 1770 he accompanied two young Livonian noblemen, as tutor, to the

university of Strasburg, where he became acquainted with young Goethe, and was one of the first apostles of the new poetical light of Shakspeare and Nature, in opposition to the French drama, and its bad German imitator, the old, stiff, conventional school. Shakspeare had just been, we might say, discovered in Germany, and no one, perhaps, felt the immense influence which his works then exercised over the young and inspired generation, more than Lenz, —indeed, he was its creature, and eventually its victim. Soon after the appearance of Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*, he produced, in wonderful rapid succession, his plays;—'the Tutor,' 'the Soldier,' &c.; extraordinary productions, blending the Extravagant, Crude, and even Absurd, with touches of the greatest beauty, of deep knowledge of the human heart and of society, and of the sweetest tenderness of feeling. His style is straight-forward, bold, and energetic, though often rough, to affectation.

"However great his talents were, yet some thing sickly and mannered—a certain whimsicality—are discernible in all his compositions; they are not the production of a happy and thoroughly healthy mind; and a polemical tendency, more in the spirit of a poetical reformer than of a poet, betrays the revolutionizing impulse of that period, and of that strong excitement which was produced by Goethe's early works. His genius was soon exhausted, and he could no longer master the spirits himself had conjured up. In 1777 he had witnessed the death of a sister of Goethe's, and it affected him so much, that, soon after, he became raving mad. No writing materials were allowed him. A young boot-maker was his guardian; and the poor maniac grew so fond of him, that he learned his trade from him. Some letters of his are still extant (in which he recommends his new friend to the patronage of a gentleman whom he formerly knew,) abject and puerile, and touching proofs of the frail tenure by which man holds all that is his—even his intellect.

"He recovered,—but his genius was gone;—his later attempts in composition are poor. He died at Moscow about 1780.

"Goethe describes him in his autobiography. But for this mention of him, he might now be entirely forgotten; some of his plays are even now lost. In 1828 Tieck published an edition of his works, as far as they could be recovered,—an edition graced by a masterly introduction from that eminent man, to which we have principally recurred for the present notice. It is most remarkable, as containing a complete exposition of the grounds of Tieck's opposition to Goethe."

C. K.

I add a translation of Goethe's account of Lenz. After a lively description of the vehement effect produced by Shakspeare on the young men at Strasburg with whom he associated, Goethe continues:

"If any one wishes to have a more perfect and intimate knowledge of what was at that time thought, said, and done in that animated and excited set of young men, let him read Herder's Essay on Shakspeare; and farther, Lenz's Observations on the Stage, to which a translation of Love's Labour Lost is annexed. Herder penetrates into the depth of Shakspeare's nature, and gives a masterly delineation of it. Lenz rather makes war, with the fury of an iconoclast, on the conventional and imitative character of our drama, and insists on every thing, every where, being treated after the Shakspearian manner.

"As I have been led to the mention of this extraordinary man, this is the place to endeavour to give some notion of his character. I did not become acquainted with him till towards the end of my residence at Strasburg. We saw each other rarely; his society was not mine, but we sought opportunities of meeting, and gladly interchanged the thoughts and feelings which, from similarity of age, we cherished in common. Small, but well and tightly built, with a most beautiful little head, to the elegant turn of which his pretty, somewhat truncated features, were perfectly suited; blue eyes, fair hair—in short, such a person as I have met with, from time to time, among the youths of the North; a soft, and, as it were, cautious step; a pleasant utterance, with a very slight hesitation, and a demeanour something between reserved and bashful—very becoming in a young man. He read aloud small poems, especially his own, remarkably well, and wrote a flowing hand. To express the turn of his mind, I can find only the English word *whimsical*, which, as even the dictionary shows, comprises a cast variety of oddities in one composite idea. Perhaps, therefore, no one was more capable than he of feeling and imitating the wild flights and exuberant fancies of Shakspeare. The translation I have just mentioned is a proof of this. He handles his author with great freedom, is by no means faithful and close, but he knows so well how to fit on the armour, or rather the motley, of his original,—he mimics his antics and grimaces with so much humour,—that he must needs obtain the applause of all those who delight in such things.

"The absurdities of the clowns were our especial delight, and we thought Lenz a highly-favoured mortal, in having produced some verses in their style.

"The inclination towards the Absurd, which displays itself, free and unfettered, in early youth, and gradually subsides or re-

treats to the more inward depths of our minds, though it is never entirely lost, was in its full vigour and luxuriance among us, and we sought to do honour to one great master by the production of original jests. We were quite triumphant whenever we could lay before the company any thing of this sort which met with approbation. When such things were submitted, we had sometimes very serious discussions whether they were worthy of the genuine clowns or not; whether they had flowed from the pure well-head of foolery, or whether they were adulterated with any undue portion of sense and reason.

"These strange fancies were the more actively diffused, and found the greater number of readers prepared for their reception, because Lessing (who was extremely looked up to) had given the first signal for them in his *Dramaturgie.*"—(*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, book xi.)

The fourteenth book opens thus:

"Together with this extending movement of the public mind, was another; for the author, perhaps, of greater importance, since it prevailed among those by whom he was most immediately surrounded. Elder friends, who had seen in manuscript those poems which now excited so much attention, and thence regarded them as in some sort their own, triumphed in the success which they, boldly enough, had predicted for them. To them were added new partisans, or participants, especially those who traced a productive power in themselves, or who wished to stimulate or to cherish it. Among the former, Lenz distinguished himself by especial and wonderful vivacity and zeal. The exterior of this remarkable man is already sketched, and his humorous talent affectionately remembered. Now I will try to speak of his character, rather from results than descriptively, since it were impossible to accompany him on all the wild eccentricities of his career, or to give an idea of his peculiarities. We all know that kind of self-torment which was then in vogue, just because we were not suffering or dreading any evils from without, and which disquieted the highest sort of minds. That which gives ordinary men, who do not watch themselves, only a transient uneasiness which they endeavour to drive out of their minds, is, by the better sort, keenly observed, minutely studied, and recorded in letters, journals, and other writings. But now the most rigorous moral demands on ones-self and others were associated with the greatest negligence in action; and an arrogant conceit, springing from this half self-knowledge, led to the strangest habits and manners.

"This wearing-out of the mind in self-observation found a sort of justification in the newly awakened empirical psychology,

which did not go the length of denouncing all that causes inward conflicts as bad and blameable, but yet could not quite approve it. And thus was an eternal and unappeaseable contest excited. To lead and to keep up this debate, Lenz now outdid all other unoccupied, or half-occupied people, who grope and pour into the inmost recesses of their minds; and thus he was, in all respects, a sufferer from that temper of the times, which should have been terminated by the portraiture of Werther. But an idiosyncracy of his mind distinguished him from all the others, who must be thoroughly recognised as frank, honest men. He had a decided propensity to intrigue—to intrigue, for its own sake —without having any thing one could call an aim,—any intelligible, attainable, self-regarding object. He used rather constantly to propose to himself some thing grotesque; and for that very reason, it furnished him with continual amusement. In this way, he was, his whole life long, a rogue in imagination; his love, like his hate, was imaginary; he designedly and wilfully deceived and seduced with his descriptions and his feelings, in order that he might always have some thing to do. He sought, by the most absurd and distorted means, to give reality to his inclinations and his aversions, and then always destroyed his own work himself; and thus he never did a service to one he loved, nor an injury to one he hated. He seemed only to sin for his own punishment; only to intrigue, in order to prop a new fable on an old one.

"His talent was the offspring of real depth of mind, and of exhaustless productivity. Tenderness, mobility, and subtilty contended for supremacy in it, but with all his beauty it was morbid: and such talents are just the hardest to appreciate. It was impossible not to perceive marks of real greatness in his works; a sweet tenderness insinuates itself through them amid the most silly and barroque monstrosities and fancies, which can hardly be forgiven, even for the sake of such thorough and unaffected humour, and so truly comic a vein. His days were made up of mere nothings, to which he, from his tendency to emotion, found means to give importance; and he was able to loiter away the more hours, because the time he spent in reading was fertilized by his excellent memory, and enriched his original imagination with varied materials.

"He was sent to Strasburg with two young Liefland nobles, and a mentor could hardly be more unfortunately chosen. The elder Baron went back for a while to his own country, leaving a lady to whom he was wholly devoted. Lenz, in order to keep the younger brother (who also paid court to the lady,) and other lovers, at a distance, and to preserve this treasure of a heart for his absent friend, now determined to affect to fall in love with her; or, it may be, to fall in love with her in reality. This

scheme he followed out with the most obstinate adherence to the Ideal of it he had formed to himself; without choosing to perceive that he, like others, served only for the lady's jest and amusement.

"So much the better for him! For with him it was mere acting, and would last the longer, the longer she answered to it by acting, and now attracted, now repelled, now exalted, now humbled him. One may be assured, that whenever he was conscious of this (as was now and then the case,) he congratulated himself on finding such a treasure with the utmost complacency.

"He and his pupils lived chiefly with the officers of the garrison, where he probably got the conception of those extraordinary scenes which he afterwards represented in his comedy of 'the Soldiers' (*Die Soldaten.*) This early acquaintance with military men had one curious effect; he thought himself very learned in the art of war. And indeed he had gradually studied it so in detail, that some years afterwards he actually addressed a long memoir to the French minister at war, from which he promised himself great things. The diseases of the system were pointed out with tolerable acuteness; the remedies were ludicrous and impracticable. He, however, was fully persuaded that it would give him great influence at court; and felt no gratitude to the friends who, partly by argument, partly by active opposition, tried to restrain him from sending this fantastic work (which was already neatly copied, packed in an envelope and formally addressed, with an accompanying letter,) and who afterwards induced him to burn it.

"In conversation, and afterwards in writing, he had confided to me all the mazes of his strange eccentric conduct with regard to that young lady. The poetry that he found means to infuse into the most trivial things often astonished me, so that I earnestly entreated him to fructify the kernel of this long-winded adventure and to found a little novel upon it; but this did not suit him; he was never happy but when he could pour his whole mind boundlessly into the Individual, and spin an endless thread without aim or object. Perhaps it might at one time have been possible, with these data, to make the course of his life, up to the time when he lost himself in madness, in some degree intelligible; at present, I must keep to that which is nearer to my purpose.

"Scarcely had Goetz of Berlichingen appeared, when Lenz sent me a long essay written upon small paper, such as he generally used, without the least margin, above, below, or at the side. It was entitled, 'On our Marriage,' and if I had it now, it would throw more light upon our subject than it did then to me; for I was still much in the dark concerning him and his character.

The main purpose of this prolix essay was to place my talent and his in contra-position. Sometimes he appeared to rate himself below, sometimes on a level with me; but all this was done with such a humourous and graceful *tournure*, that I willingly adopted the views he wished to inspire me with;—the more, since I really estimated his endowments very highly, and only continually urged him to collect himself out of that formless vagrancy and dissipation of mind, and to employ the gifts of imagination which were bestowed upon him, with the self-possession requisite for art. I answered his confidence in the friendliest manner, and as he pressed for the most intimate union (as his strange title sufficiently indicated,) I communicated every thing to him, from this time forward; as well what I had already worked out, as what I projected. On the other hand he sent me his manuscripts, 'the Private Tutor,' 'the New Menoza,' 'the Soldiers,' 'Imitations of Plautus,' and that translation from the English, which I have mentioned as appendix to his remarks on the drama.

"In this it struck me as rather extraordinary that, in a laconic introduction, he expressed himself as if the contents of this essay, which was a violent attack on the regular drama, had been read some years previously in the form of a lecture before a society of lovers of literature: at a time, too, when Goetz had not appeared. Among Lenz's Strasburg connexions, a circle of which I knew nothing, seemed somewhat problematical; but I let it go, and procured him a publisher for this, as well as for his other works, without taking the slightest notice that he had selected me as the special object of his imaginary hatred, and of a fantastic and capricious persecution."—(*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, book xiv.)

Note 27.

I give this extraordinary song, as a specimen of Goethe's power over the tones of language. Because it is so, I cannot attempt a translation of it. Where so much depends on the sounds of words translation can rarely answer. In Mr. William Taylor's version of Bürger's *Lenore*, it does perfectly; but that is a most rare instance, and, so far as I know, unrivalled.

Zigeunerlied.

Im Nebelgriesel, im tiefen Schnee,
Im wilden Wald, in der Winternacht,
Ich hörte der Wölfe Hungergeheul,
Ich hörte der Eulen Geschrei:
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

Ich schoss einmal eine Katz'am Zaun,
Der Anne, der Hex', ihre schwarze liebe Katz';
Da kamen des Nachts sieben Wehrwölf' zu mir,
Waren sieben sieben Weiber vom Dorf.
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

Ich kannte sie all', ich kannte sie wohl
Die Anne, die Ursel, die Käth',
Die Liese, die Barbe, die Ev', die Beth;
Sie heulten im Kreise mich an.
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

Da nannt' ich sie alle bei Namen laut:
Was willst du, Anne? was willst du, Beth?
Da rüttelten sie sich, da schüttelten sie sich
Und liefen und heulten daron.
Wille wau wau wau!
Wille wo wo wo!
Wito hu!

Note 28.

These beautiful lines, which have all the calm and harmony of a summer night, afford a singular contrast to the poem in the last Note. Their sweetness is, perhaps, as unattainable as the wild

dissonance of the other; but I venture this attempt at their meaning—and some thing like the measure.

Every tree-top is at peace——
E'en the rustling woods do cease
Every sound:
The small birds sleep on every bough;
Wait but a moment—soon wilt thou
Sleep in peace!

The last line of the original rhymes with the first two.

Note 29.

Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger, born at Frankfurt on the Maine, 1753. He is of the number of those, by whose powerful and extraordinary productions that movement in our literature was wrought fifty years ago, which has been called, after the title of one of his plays (*Sturm-und-Drang*,) the storm-and-passion period. He, too, was excited by the genius of Shakspeare, and his youthful strength delighted to try itself in the regions of the Unwonted. As it was real strength that elevated and impelled him, he could safely venture on the Untried; and his daring was most successful. No German writer had, as yet, so roused all passions, as he did by his 'Twins' (*Die Zwillingen.*) The great admiration bestowed upon him deserved that he should not long suffer himself to be misled into wild and devious paths. Practice, and intercourse with the world, he himself tells us, reclaimed him from exaggeration and violence. "Civil and domestic life must teach every man that simplicity, order, and truth are the enchanter's wands with which we must touch the heart, if we would have it return a sound." How much does this admission make us regret that we do not know more of his life!

Klinger received his first education at the gymnasium at Frankfurt; after which, he studied at the University of Giessen. His inclination was for a military life; and on the breaking out of the Bavarian war of succession, he entered the Austrian service. In 1780 he went from Weimar to Petersburg, where he received

a commission in the Marines from the High Admiral, Grand Prince Paul, and was also appointed his reader. In his suite he travelled over great part of Europe. In the early part of Paul's reign he rose to the rank of major-general. On this slippery and perilous course, amid the most critical circumstances, at a time when manly firmness and courage were full of danger, he stood fast in the maintenance of high moral strength, and secured the unshaken confidence of all around him. In the second year of Alexander's reign, he received the order of St. Anne of the first class, and the rent of a crown estate in Courland for life. Other honours followed. In 1811 he was made lieutenant-general. After forty years of active service, he resigned all his posts and retired upon a pension, retaining only his voice in the council and the superintendance of two institutions founded by the Empress Maria. At the close of life, he expressed his obligations to his two early friends, Goethe and Georg Schlosser, for the advice he had often received from them. Amidst all this activity in public life, Klinger had gained views on poetry which our æsthetikers did not dream of. A high moral tone, a spirit busied with great and noble thoughts, a vigorous, manly intellect and character, simple habits, enjoyment in a moderate way of living, perfect ignorance of the passion for happiness-hunting—who had ever thought of requiring these qualities in a poet? How such a theory arose in his mind; how first the actual world presented itself to his mind's eye only through a poetic veil; then how the poetic world was shaken to its foundations by the actual one, and how at last it gained the victory, because the self-sustained moral sense diffused light through the darkness which threatened to enshroud the poet's mind, the attentive reader will readily find many a trace of in the poet's delightful 'Observations and Thoughts on various subjects connected with the World and with Literature,' (*Betrachtungen und Gedanken über verschiedene Gegenstände der Welt und Literatur.*) With such views he projected a series of novels: 'Faust's life, deeds, and flight to hell;' 'The History of Giafer the Barmecide;' 'The History of Raphael Aquinas;' 'Travels before the Flood;' 'The Faust of the Orientals;' History of a German of modern times;' 'The Man of the world and the Poet,' (in every point of view his most perfect work;) 'Sahir;' 'Eve's First-born in Paradise.' These works embrace all the natural and artificial relations of life, the whole moral being of man; and touch upon society, religion, high ideal conceptions, the sweet dreams of another world, the gleaming hope of a purer state of being, even on this earth. The tone of the tales is, of course, different; and as different is the impression they leave on the mind of the reader. The heart, torn by 'Faust,' is strengthened and elevated by 'Giafer' and 'Raphael.'

If cold reason seeks to wither the blossoms of life, in the Faust of the East they are quickened anew by the heart. If the 'Man of the world and the Poet,' and the 'History of a German' awaken a gentle melancholy, it is as gently chased by the 'Sahir.' In the collection of his works, he has bequeathed to posterity the purest of his feelings, the noblest of his wishes, the best of his thoughts, in all the completeness he could give them. They were published in 12 volumes, by Nicolovius (Konigsberg, 1809-10.")—(*Abridged from the Conv.-Lex.*)

Almost immediately after the description of Lenz, in the *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, follows this of Klinger.

"If the orator or the writer, conscious of the powerful effect of contrasts, is glad to employ them, even though he have to seek them out, and bring them together from afar, it must be the more agreeable to an author when so striking a one presents itself to him as the description of Klinger, after that of Lenz, will afford. They were cotemporaries, and their youthful efforts were made in concert. Lenz, however, like a transient meteor, passed for a moment athwart the horizon of German literature, and then vanished, without leaving a trace behind. Klinger, on the other hand, maintained his station as an influential writer, as an active and able man of business, up to this hour. I will now without farther comparison, which will manifest itself, speak of him, in so far as it is necessary,—since the variety and quantity he has produced are not hidden, but both hold their places in the memory and the estimation of his friends and of the public.

"Klinger's exterior—for with that I always prefer to begin—was very advantageous. Nature had given him a tall, slender, well turned person, and regular features; he was attentive to his appearance, dressed neatly, and might claim to be considered the best-looking member of our little society. His demeanour was neither conciliatory nor repulsive, and even amid the most violent internal storm, calm and moderate.

"In a girl, we love what she is;—in a young man, what he promises to be; and thus was I Klinger's friend, as soon as I became acquainted with him. He made a favourable impression by his genuine amiableness, and a decision of character which it was impossible to mistake, won him confidence. He was remarked, from his youth up, for a grave, earnest manner; he and a sister, as handsome and as estimable as himself, had the charge of a widowed mother, who needed such children to support her. All that was in him he had procured and created for himself; so that one could not be displeased with the traces of haughty independence which ran through all his demeanour. Various original projects, such as are common to all well-endowed men—facility

of comprehension,—an admirable memory and enunciation—these he possessed in a high degree: but all these he seemed to value far less than the firmness and perseverance which were not only innate in him, but thoroughly confirmed by circumstances.

"On such a young man, Rousseau's works must needs make a peculiar impression. *Emile* was his grand elementary book; and the thoughts in it, which exercised an influence over the whole civilized world, struck root and fructified in him in particular. For he, too, was a child of nature;—he, too, had made his way upwards, from the humblest beginnings; what others ought to get rid of, he had never possessed—connexions; these, from which others emancipate themselves as they can, never cramped and fettered him: and thus he might be regarded as the most genuine disciple of that gospel of nature; and in virtue of his strenuous efforts, and of his conduct as man and as son, might very fairly exclaim, 'All is good as it comes out of the hands of Nature!' But unfortunately the sequel—'All degenerates under the hands of man'—was forced upon him by painful experience. He had to struggle not with himself, but with the work of common-place and of prejudice around him, from which the citizen of Geneva sought to deliver us.

"But as, in the position of a young man, this conflict is often difficult and keen, he felt himself too violently driven back upon himself, ever to attain to a gay and joyous turn of mind. He had to take every thing by storm and vehement pressure; and hence a vein of bitterness insinuated itself into his mind and manners. And this he sometimes cherished and encouraged in after life, but more frequently fought against and conquered.

"His productions, in so far as they are present to my mind, are marked by a vigorous, severe intellect; a thoroughly sincere, honest intention; a lively imagination; a happy turn for the observation of the varieties of human nature, and a characteristic delineation of the generical differences. His girls and boys are free, natural, and lovely; his youths ardent; his men straight-forward and intelligent;* the unfavourable characters not overdrawn; there is no want of cheerfulness and good humour, wit and happy thoughts; he has allegories and symbols at command; he can amuse and please us, and our enjoyment would be yet purer if he did not here and there darken a gay jest by a tinge of bitter misanthrophy. But this makes him just what he is; and hence is it that the varieties of the Living and the Writing are

* *Verständig* is the word—and is not *intelligent*, but what is, in common parlance, called *sensible*. I cannot prevail on myself to employ it in such a sense, whatever be the authority. We are without an adjective expressing *having a good understanding*.—*Transl.*

so numerous; that each floats hither and thither, theoretically, between conviction and error,—practically, between quickening and destroying.

"Klinger belongs to the class of persons who form themselves for the world out of their own temper and understanding. And since this class (now much more numerous than formerly) used a language common to themselves,—which was powerful and effective inasmuch as it was borrowed from universal nature and from national peculiarities,—they conceived and cherished an intense disgust for school forms, especially when, severed from their living source, they degenerated into phrases, and thus totally lost their first fresh significancy.

"And as such men declare themselves against new opinions, views or systems, so do they also against new events, against remarkable and pre-eminent men, who announce, or effect, great changes; a line of conduct that ought no wise to displease us in them, since they see that to which they owe their whole existence and education menanced.

"This pertinacity of a sturdy character, however, acquires dignity when it sustains itself through the intercourse and business of life; and when a manner of treating what occurs, which to many might appear abrupt, nay, violent, applied at the right time, leads most certainly to its end.

"This was the case with him; for, without any pliancy (which, indeed was never the virtue of a true born *Reichsbürger**,) but so much the more vigorously, firmly, and honourably, he raised himself to important posts; maintained himself in them, and received the approbation and favour of his highest patrons; while he never forgot either his old friends, or the road which lay behind him. Indeed, he perseveringly endeavoured to preserve an unshaken constancy of remembrance, through all stages and degrees of absence and of separation. It deserves to be noticed, that he, like another Willigis, did not scorn to perpetuate allusions to his early days in his armorial bearings, graced as they were with the decorations of numerous orders."—*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, book ii.

I have willingly seized upon this occasion of giving a few imperfect glimpses of the contents of the *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Of the scandalous dishonesty of the translation of that work I have spoken elsewhere; and it was sufficiently exposed in the Westminster Review. The evil genius of England, however, was not satisfied with this display of unprincipled disloyalty and ignorant presumption, directed against an illustrious poet. The

* Native of a free imperial city.—*Transl.*

article which appeared in the Edinburgh Review, on the same work, was fully a match, intellectually and morally, for the translation. It contains not one single extract, from which the reader might judge of the style or nature of the contents—not even a remark of the author on any subject on which the opinion of such a man must excite the curiosity, if it does not command the admiration of every cultivated mind.

Such attacks, it is true, have had, and will have, not the slightest effect on Goethe's fame; but they have had the effect of discrediting English criticism, and of indurating the arrogant prejudices of the half-educated and one-sided among English readers.

Note 30.

Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim, born in 1719, in the principality of Halberstadt. His father died when he was sixteen, and the young and destitute Gleim was educated at the charge of some benevolent families. He went to the high-school at Halle, and pursued his studies in the midst of poverty, with ardour and cheerfulness. The celebrated jurist Heineccius, Baumgarten, and Wolf, were among his instructors. In 1740, he went as private tutor, into the family of a Colonel Schulz, at Potsdam, where Prince Wilhelm, son of the Markgraf of Brandenberg-Schwedt, became acquainted with him, and made him his private secretary. Here he formed that intimacy with Ewald Christian von Kleist, which continued through life.

The second Silesian war, in 1744, separated Gleim from his literary friends, and robbed him of his kind patron, who fell before Prague. After some time, he was appointed secretary to the Chapter at Halberstadt, where he lived very agreeably. He corresponded with all the literary of Germany, Lessing, Gessner, Wieland, *&c.* In 1749, he published his collection of Songs. He became acquainted with Klopstock, Gellert, Rabener, *&c.* and used to assemble them about him at Halberstadt, where they enjoyed life and poetry together. He was intimate with them all—for friendship was the element of his life. He had the rare and fortunate talent of discovering what was excellent in every one, and of rejoicing in it as a personal advantage. The most different characters were brought into contact and harmony by

the force and vivacity of his friendship;—each turned to him in every event of life, good or evil, certain of the most active help, the most cordial sympathy. He was never married. His clever niece, Dorothea, so often celebrated under the name of Gleminde, kept his house. The war-songs which he published during the seven years' war in the character of a Prussian grenadier, raised his fame to its highest pitch. They remain to this day unequalled for tone, elevation, vigour, and animation, and have obtained for their author a high place among the poets of Germany. Poetry was rather an enjoyment than a business to him. Whether an attempt succeeded or not, it had furnished *him* with agreeable occupation. He drew and planted around him a circle of young literary friends, and his zeal for their social welfare, as well as for their literary fame, knew no bounds. He conceived the project of founding an academy at Halberstadt, which, in his will, he called 'A School of Humanity,' but which was too vague to be practicable. He had the rare talent of mixing with all classes and sorts of men, on the most kindly footing. His 'Songs for the People' show this. He was a philanthropist, in the truest and noblest sense of the word. His patriotism was pure and ardent. The French revolution filled him with dismay. His prophetic spirit saw the storm about to burst over his beloved fatherland. His exhortations to Germans to unite, and to struggle till death for the independence of Germany, were unceasing. He devoted his talents to the endeavour to inspire the people with sound notions on liberty and equality—on the duties of sovereign and subject. His voice was lost in the universal uproar of political elements. He therefore sought repose from the gloomy and threatening Present in retirement. Two years before his death he became totally blind. In the 84th year of his age he took leave of his friends, and died, tranquil and resigned. His person is faithfully delineated in Klopstock's Ode—the image of his mind, the language of his heart, live in the smallest of his sayings or poems. Hagedorn and he gave us the light *naif* song;—he, before Hagedorn and others, the true child's fable, the playful romance, the Tyrtean war-song. As a father of youth, as a friend of man, his memory lives in the hearts of all the good and the noble:—they have given him the fairest of all titles—'Father Gleim.'—(*Abridged from the Conversations-Lexicon.*)

A notice of Gleim, and some translations, are to be found in the first volume of Taylor's Survey. Among the latter is a master-piece of translation, beginning 'We met—a hundred of us met.—' To the beautiful and affecting portrait above, I add the following passage from the *Tag-und-Jahres Hefte.* I trust this and other extracts will be a sufficient answer to the charge

brought against Goethe, that he liked to depreciate other men of letters.

A. D. 1805.—"Our visit to Halberstadt was very tranquil and satisfactory. The noble-hearted Gleim had rejoined the friends of his youth some years before. A visit which I had paid him long ago had left only a dim impression; and the busy, varied life I had since led, had nearly effaced from my remembrance the peculiarities of his person and manners. Nor could I, either then or subsequently, form any connexion with him; but his activity was never unknown to me; I heard much of him from Wieland and Herder, with whom he kept up a correspondence.

"We were very kindly received in his house, by Herr Körte. It spoke of neatness and competency—a peaceful life, and quiet social comfort. We honoured his memory in his posterity, and heard and talked much about him.

"Gleim's poetry was akin to the whole spirit of German life and manners. The character displayed by the poet is more peculiarly that of a man loving and worthy to be loved. His poetry, looked at on the technical side, is rhythmical, not melodious; for which reason he generally employed the freer metres. Verse and rhyme, letters and essays, intermingled, produce the impression of an agreeable sort of mind, occupied within judiciously-chosen limits.

"We were particularly charmed with his Temple of Friendship, containing a collection of portraits of older and more recent date. They showed how he valued his cotemporaries, and agreeably recalled to us many distinguished countenances—their indwelling spirits—their relation to one another, and to the excellent man who generally collected them for a time around him, and took care to keep the departing and the absent with him—at least in effigy. This was a sight to suggest many a reflection; I shall mention but one—there were above a hundred poets and *littérateurs*, but not one single musician or composer. How was this? Could the excellent old man, who according to his own representations, seemed to live and breathe only in singing, have not even a guess of the real nature of song—of music?—the true element whence all poetry springs, and into which it all returns.

"If we tried to collect together all our floating notions of the noble-hearted man into one conception, it would amount to this. The ground-work of his character was a passionate benevolence, which he endeavoured to render active, in word and in deed; encouraging every one, by conversation and by writing; labouring to diffuse a universal and pure feeling of humanity; he was the friend of all; beneficent to the wretched, but more peculiarly the resource of indigent youth. Frugal in his household, beneficence

seems to have been the only taste on which he expended what was not necessary to himself. Most of what he did was from his own resources; more rarely, and not till the later years of his life, he employed his name and reputation to acquire some influence with kings and ministers. But he gained little by this; they treated him with respect, tolerated and commended his activity, assisted him a little, but generally hesitated to enter vigorously into his views.

"Altogether, we must admit that he had the sense of the duties of a citizen, in the highest and most singular degree. As man, he rested wholly on himself; he held an important public post; proved himself, towards city, province, and kingdom, a patriot, and, towards the German fatherland and the world, a true, genuine 'Liberal.' On the other hand, all the revolutionary projects and proceedings which occurred in his later years, were utterly hateful to him, as had formerly been all that was hostile to Prussia and to her great monarch.

"And farther—as every religion ought to promote the pure and peaceful intercourse of man with man, and as the Christian evangelical religion is peculiarly adapted to that end, he, who constantly practised that religion of the upright which was an integral and necessary part of his nature, might well and truly consider himself as the most orthodox of men, and might rest tranquilly in the hereditary profession, and the established simple rites, of the Protestant church.

"After all these lively reminiscences, we went to see another image of the departed—we visited the sick bed of Gleim's dying niece, who, under the name of Gleminde, had been for many years the ornament of a poetical circle. Her sweet, though sickly countenance, was in delicate harmony with the exquisite neatness of all around her; and we had an interesting conversation on those delightful by-gone days, and on the works and ways of her excellent uncle, which were ever present to her.

"Lastly, to conclude our pilgrimage solemnly and worthily, we went into the garden, to the grave of this honest and noble old man, to whom it was granted, after so many years of sorrow and suffering, of activity and patience, to rest in the spot he loved, surrounded by memorials of departed friends."

Note 31.

I do not attempt any translation of this song, which has a sweet simplicity that reminds me of some of Burn's songs:

Schäfars Klagelied.

Da droben auf jenem Berge
Da steh' ich tausendmal
An meinem Stabe gebogen
Und schaue hinab in das Thal.

Dann folg' ich der weidenden Herde,
Mein Hündchen bewahret mir sie.
Ich bin herunter gekommen
Und weiss doch selber nicht wie.

Da stehet von schönen Blumen
Die ganze Wiese so voll.
Ich breche sie, ohne zu wissen,
Wem ich sie geben soll.

Und Regen, Sturm und Gewitter
Verpass' ich unter dem Baum.
Die Thüre dort blibet verschlossen;
Doch alles ist leider ein Traum.

Es stehet ein Regenbogen
Wohl über jenem Haus!
Sie aber ist weggezogen,
Und weit in das Land hinaus.

Hinaus in das Land und weiter,
Vielleicht gar über die See.
Vorüber, ihr Schafe, vorüber!
Dem Schäfer ist gar zu weh.

Note 32.

When I gave a literal translation of these lines (p. 72, vol. i.,) I did not recollect in which of Schiller's plays they occurred. I should hardly have been guilty of the absurdity of translating what has been translated by Mr. Coleridge.

This is his version:

> "Self-contradiction is the only wrong;
> For by the laws of spirit, in the right
> Is every individual character
> That acts in strict consistence with itself."
> *Wallenstein*, Act iv. Scene 7.

The other passage (quoted at p. 72, vol. i.,) he renders thus—

> "And with success comes pardon hand in hand,
> For all event is God's arbitrement."

It is from an earlier part of the same scene, between Wallenstein and Countess Tertsky.

Note 33.

I do not find Merk in the *Conversations-Lexicon*, from which I infer that there is little to tell about him (in addition to what is related in the text) but what we gather from Goethe's description in the *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. He calls him "Mephistophiles Merk," and it seems probable that Merk's bitter, scornful misanthropy might furnish many hints for that consummate portrait of a "sneering devil."

Goethe says, "his presence never brought a blessing any where." The inward discontent, which ended in self-destruc-

tion, was of a very different character in him, and in the unhappy but noble Kleist.

I have extracted these fragments, detached as they are, because they are all I can find relating to one of Goethe's earliest friends.

"I was soon introduced to Merk, to whom I had been not unfavourably announced from Strasburg, by Herder. This singular man, who had the greatest influence on my life, was born at Darmstadt. Of his early education I can say little. After he had completed his studies he accompanied a young man, as tutor, to Switzerland, where he remained for some time, and came back with a wife. When I became acquainted with him he was paymaster to the forces in Darmstadt."

"Born with understanding and talent, he had acquired a great deal of liberal knowledge, particularly of modern literature, and had looked at the history of the world and of mankind under all aspects and in all countries. He was endowed with a keen and accurate judgment. He was esteemed an excellent, decided man of business, and ready accountant. He found easy access every where, as he was a most agreeable companion to those to whom he did not make himself formidable by biting sarcasms. His person was tall and gaunt; he had a long projecting pointed nose, light blue, or rather gray eyes, which moved to and fro with a keen watchfulness, and gave his face a tiger-like expression. Lavater has preserved his profile."

"In his character lay a wonderful incongruity; by nature a frank, honourable, and trustworthy man, he had become embittered against the world, and had suffered this morbid caprice to gain such power over him, that he felt an unconquerable inclination to be designedly, and of malice afore-thought, a rogue—nay, a rascal. Reasonable, calm, kind at one moment, in the next he might be seized with a sudden impulse to do something which would vehemently offend or even injure another. But as people delight to play round a danger from which they fancy themselves secure, I had all the greater inclination to live with him, and to enjoy his good qualities. I had a confident sort of presentiment that he would not turn his bad side to me. But as, on the one hand, he spoiled society for himself by this restless spirit, by this uncontrollable propensity to treat men with scorn and spite, on the other, a different sort of disquiet, which he also most assiduously nourished in himself, was at variance with his inward complacency. He felt a certain dilettanteish passion for writing, which was the more violent from the ease and felicity with which he expressed himself in prose and in verse, and from his undoubted claims to play a part among the *beaux esprits* of the time. I still possess poetic epistles of his of uncommon boldness, force,

and Swift-like bitterness—singularly marked by their original views of persons and things, but written with such a power of giving pain and offence, that I should not, even now, venture to publish them, but must either destroy them, or leave them to posterity as a striking document of the secret split in our literature."

"It was, however, a source of suffering to himself that all his labours were undertaken in a spirit of contradiction and destruction. And he often expressed his envy of me for my innocent pleasure in creation and description,* which sprang from delight in the original and in the copy.† In other respects his literary dilettantism would have been rather advantageous than injurious to him, had he not also had an uncontrollable propensity to engage in technical and mercantile affairs. For one moment he would execrate his talents for business, and be almost distracted at his inability to satisfy the claims of a flexible talent with sufficient geniality, and the next would let poetry and all the other arts go to the winds, and ponder over manufacturing or commercial speculations which brought him in money, while they furnished him with amusement."—(*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, book xi.)

"I hoped that Merk would prolong his stay at Giessen; but he was not to be moved, and was driven away by his hatred of the university. For as there are innate antipathies, and one man

* *Darstellung* (before-placing.) This is one of the words which continually occur, to the grief and perplexity of the translator. I have here used two words to express it, but, in truth, neither does—nor have I ever been able to satisfy myself with a rendering of it. Our Latin-English *preposition* (or perhaps *opposition*) is perfectly analogous in structure, but is otherwise disposed of. *Representation* does in some cases, as for instance when it relates to the drama. But it is one proof among many of the total absence of æsthetical science among us, that we can dispense with a generic word expressing the *putting-before* the senses or the imagination, objects with which they are cognizant. In the title of my text-work I have used *pourtrayed* for *dargestellt*, but that, or *delineated*, besides being foreign words, are metaphorical and borrowed from *one* art.—*Transl.*

† *Freude an dem Vorbild und dem Nachgebildeten. Vorbild* may here have one of two different senses, or it may include both. I will not take upon me to say which is the intention of the author. It may mean the *Idea* or *Type* in the mind of the artist, of which the *Nachgebildete* is the outward expression;—or it may mean the external *Object*, which is *dargestellt*—represented or pourtrayed. In the one case the production of the *Nachgebildeten* is what we should call *creation;* in the other, *description.* The original includes both, and is therefore the more completely and accurately adapted to Goethe.—*Transl.*

cannot bear a cat, and another's whole soul recoils from some other thing, Merk had a mortal emnity to all members of a university; and, to say truth, those of Giessen were at this time fallen into incredible rudeness. I liked them extremely. I could very well have used them as masks in one of my carnival pieces; but the sight of them by day, and the uproar by night, destroyed every particle of good humour in him. He had passed the best of his young days in French Switzerland, and had afterwards enjoyed a very agreeable intercourse with courtiers, men of the world, of business, and of letters; several military men, in whom a desire for instruction was stirred up, sought his acquaintance; and thus he had passed his life among very accomplished and well-bred people."

"That these bad manners displeased him, therefore, was not wonderful; but his aversion to the students was really more violent than beseemed a reasonable man, though he used often to make me laugh by his witty descriptions of their monstrous appearance and behaviour."—(Book xii.)

"But even in this pleasant company." (at the house of Frau von Laroche, of Coblentz,) "the matter of incompatibility, the disagreeable effects of which generally break out in educated as well as uneducated society, grew and flourished in secret. Merk, at once cold and restless, had not long listened to the letters which were read, when he began to let fall his sarcastic remarks on persons and things." * * * * *

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Goethe speaks of 'Goetz of Berlichingen,' which he had written and was polishing. He says—

"As soon as I began to propose this to Merk, he laughed at me, and asked, what all this touching and re-touching meant? That things were only altered by it—seldom bettered—that we must see what effect this produced, and then set about something new; that delay and hesitation made only undecided men." *

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"The pleasure of discussing such things with Merk was of short duration, for the Landgräfin of Hessen Darmstadt took him in her suite to Petersburg. The detailed letters he wrote me gave me a wider view into the world, which I could make my own the more perfectly, because the sketches were drawn by a well-known hand."—(Book xiii.)

"But here (concerning 'Clavigo') Mephistophiles Merk did me, for the first time, a great injury; for when I communicated

the play to him, he replied—'You must not write any more such rubbish,—others can do that.' And yet he was wrong."
* * * * * * * * * Book xv.

Note 34.

Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, born at Düsseldorf, in 1743. His father destined him to trade. He went to school at Frankfurt, where his deep feeling of religion manifested itself even at that early age, and often rendered him an object of ridicule to his companions. From Frankfurt, he went to Geneva, where he remained three years. During this time his mind had made such progress, that he returned home with heavy heart, to enter on the management of his father's business. He carried this on for several years, without, however, neglecting literature. He became acquainted with many of the most distinguished persons of his time. His brother, Johann Georg, the poet, introduced him to Wieland; but Goethe produced a still stronger effect upon his mind. He married a wife richly endowed in body and mind, and inheriting a fortune which rendered him independent. In 1779, he was invited to Munich, and appointed privy counsellor; but soon fell into disfavour, on account of the frankness with which he commented on the Bavarian custom-house system. He lived in the bosom of his amiable family, at his beautiful residence at Pempelsfort, happy in his intercourse with the greatest spirits of the age. A severe illness, and the death of his beloved wife, interrupted this felicity. He devoted himself with the more ardour to science; a journey to Weimar, where he saw Goethe, and formed a friendship with Herder, tended to recruit his spirits. His earlier works, 'Allwill" and 'Woldemar,' were a sort of philosophical novels. In 1785, he published his 'Letters on Spinoza,' (*Briefe über Spinoza*,) and from that time devoted himself chiefly to metaphysical and religious speculations. The French revolution drove him from Düsseldorf to Holstein. In 1804, he was invited to the newly-formed academy of sciences, at Munich, of which he was afterwards appointed president. On attaining his seventieth year, he relinquished this post, the salary of which was continued to him till his death. He died in 1819. Jacobi's inward life is rich in all that can attract the wise and the good. His lofty mind strove to unite poetry with philosophy.

His earlier works exhibit him as a philosophical poet; his later, the 'Letters on Spinoza's Doctrines,' 'David Hume on belief, or Idealism and Realism,' and his 'Letter to Fichte,' as a philosopher.

As a poet, he is distinguished for vigorous painting, admirable delineation of nature and the human heart, warmth and depth of of feeling, and a lively, bold, yet correct turn of expression. As a philosopher, he is admired for his rare depth of thought, for the fervour of his religious feelings, and the originality and beauty of his style. At the same time, there are few authors concerning whom opinions vary more, than concerning Jacobi. It seems as if his poetry injured him with the philosophers, and his philosophy with the poets.

Jacobi's polemical merits were great. He pointed out the chasms, the unconnectedness, and the mischievous results of the prevalent opinions, with critical acuteness, and with all the eloquence of a just aversion. With his peculiar modes of thinking, it was natural that he should not become the disciple of any other philosopher, and that he should come into conflict, alternately, with the dogmatic Mendelssohn, the critical Kant, the idealistical Fichte, and the pantheistical Schelling; against the latter of whom, indeed, he expressed himself with too much bitterness. Jacobi's place among the pure searchers after truth, must however, remain for ever uncontested. Hegel has given a character of him in the *Heidelberger Jahrbuch*, 1817.—(*Abridged from the Conversations-Lexicon.*)

Goethe thus describes his first meeting with the two brothers Jacobi. He was travelling down the Rhine, with Basedow and Lavater.

"Even at Ems, I had been delighted at the prospect of meeting the brothers Jacobi at Kölln."

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"The frankness of their younger sisters, the great cheerfulness of Fritz Jacobi's wife, attracted us more and more towards them. They had formed a very intimate friendship with my sister during their visits to Frankfurt."

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"Our first meeting at Kölln was, therefore, frank and cordial. I was no longer treated as the mere misty tail of these two great wandering stars. I was weary of my flights and follies, under which, indeed, I did but hide the craving void of my heart and mind."

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"What we have thought, the images we have seen, we recall to our understanding and to our imagination; but the heart is not so tractable; it will not repeat to us its beautiful feelings; least of all have we the power of making present to us past moments of enthusiasm; unpremeditatedly we fall into them, and we give ourselves up to them unconsciously. Others who observe us in such moments, have, therefore, a more clear and distinct perception of them than we."

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"Although poetical delineation busied me the most, and was most in harmony with my nature, yet reflection on topics of every kind was not strange to me; and Jacobi's original, and I may say constitutional, tendency to subjects beyond the reach of human inquiry, was highly welcome and interesting to me. Here was no disagreement; neither theological, as with Lavater, nor didactical, as with Basedow. The thoughts that Jacobi communicated to me sprang immediately from his feelings; and how singularly and deeply was I affected when he revealed to me, with boundless confidence, the deepest wants and aspirations of his soul! Out of so wonderful a combination of want, passion, and ideas, I could derive only a presentiment of what was, perhaps, hereafter to become more clear to me. Happily, my mind had been worked, if not formed, on this side. I had received into it the character and opinions of an extraordinary man—imperfectly, it is true, and, as it were, by snatches,—but still I found the effects considerable. The mind that wrought so powerfully on mine, and had so great an influence on the whole frame of my opinions, was Spinoza's. After I had looked around the world in vain, for means of shaping my strange moral being, I fell at length on the Ethics of this man. What I read in this work,—what I thought I read in it,—I can give no account of; enough, that I found there a calm to my passions; it seemed to open to me a wide and free view over the sensual* and the moral world. But what peculiarly rivetted to me, was the boundless disinterestedness that beamed forth from every sentence. Those wondrous words, 'He who loves God aright must not require that God should love him in return,' with all the premises on which they rest, with all the consequences with which they teem, filled my

* I have the authority of Mr. Coleridge for this use of the word, which, without it, indisputably correct as it is, I should have hardly dared to adopt.—*Transl.*

whole mind. To be disinterested in all—most of all, in love and in friendship—was my highest desire, my maxim, my task; so that those daring words which follow, 'If I love you, what is that to you?' were the true language of my heart. But here, too, we may see that the most intimate unions rest on contrast. The all-equalizing serenity of Spinoza, contrasted with my all-agitating vehemence; his mathematical precision, with my poetical way of feeling and of representing; and even that systematic method of his which was generally regarded as ill-adapted to moral questions, rendered me his most passionate disciple, his most determined admirer.

"And now all was in the first working and counter-working—boiling and fermenting. Fritz Jacobi, the first whom I allowed to look down into this chaos, whose mind was likewise travailing in the Profound, accepted my confidence with cordiality, answered me with the like, and tried to lead me into his own way of thinking. He, too, experienced an inexpressible spiritual want; he, too, would not have it appeased by foreign help, but would form and enlighten himself out of himself. What he imparted to me, of the state of his mind, I could not comprehend; the less, as I could form no adequate conception of that of my own. But he, who was far in advance of me in philosophical thinking, and even in acquaintance with Spinoza, tried to guide and enlighten my dark efforts. So pure and genuine an alliance of mind was new to me, and excited a passionate longing for farther intercommunication. At night, after we had parted and retired to our bedrooms, I often sought him again. The moonlight trembled on the broad Rhine, while we stood at the window, revelling in the fulness of this giving and receiving, which, at that glorious unfolding time of youth, springs up with such luxuriance."

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"When I returned to my friend Jacobi, I enjoyed the enrapturing feeling of a union cemented by inmost temper and character. We were both animated by the liveliest hope of common activity and common usefulness, and I urgently exhorted him to image forth all that lived and moved within him, in some powerful form. This was the means by which I had forcibly extricated myself from so many labyrinths. I hoped it might answer with him. He did not delay seizing upon it with courage; and how much that was good, lovely, heart-gladdening, did he not produce! And thus we parted, in the blessed feeling of an eternal union,—utterly without a presentiment that our labours would take contrary directions, as became but too evident in the course of our lives."—*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, book xiv.

What this great divergence of opinion was, will be in some degree explained in what follows.

"Jacobi 'On divine Things,' (*Von den göttlingen Dingen,*) was painful to me. How could the book of so dearly-loved a friend be welcome, wherein I found this thesis pervading the whole—that Nature concealed God. Could it be otherwise than that, with my manner of viewing things (both innately and by exercise, genuine and deep,) which had taught me to see God in Nature, and Nature in God, indissolubly, so that this mode of conception was become the basis of my whole existence;—could it be otherwise than that the expression of so strange, one-sided, and narrow an opinion, must forever sever me, intellectually, from this most noble man, whose heart I loved and reverenced? But I did not brood over my painful vexation; on the contrary, I took refuge in my old asylum, and found in Spinoza's Ethics my daily amusement for many weeks; and as, mean while, my own mind had advanced, many things appeared to me new and different, even in what I was familiar with before, and had a fresh and peculiar effect upon me."—*Tag-und-Jahres Hefte*, A. D. 1811.

This effect is shown in the following lines, the translation of which is extremely unsatisfactory to me:

"Was wär' ein Gott der nur von aussen stiesse
Im Kreis das All am Finger laufen liesse?
Ihm ziemt's die Welt im Innern zu bewegen,
Natur in Sich, Sich in Natur zu hegen,
So dass was in Ihm lebt, und webt, und ist,
Nie Seine Kraft, nie Seinen Geist vermisst!

TRANSLATION.

What were a God that impelled from without?
That caused the All to revolve mechanically?
Him it beseems to move the world from within,
To foster Nature in Himself, Himself in Nature;
So that what in Him lives, and moves, and has its being,
May never be without his Power, never without his Spirit.

Note 35.

Herder is perhaps sufficiently known in England to render any biographical notice of him here unnecessary: Mr. Taylor's "Survey" contains one. Mr. Taylor's estimate of Herder is not, I confess, at all satisfactory to me; but the leading incidents of his life are recorded. A translation of his great work, the *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit* was published many years ago. I never saw it, but am told it is a very poor one, probably filtered through the French, as so many of our professed translations from the German of that day were. I am told that there is a very good memoir of Herder in the Monthly Repository for November and December, 1830, signed J. J. T., and that the same journal contains an able analysis of the *Ideen, &c.* in the numbers from January to April, 1832, inclusive. I regret that they have not fallen in my way.

There is also an excellent article on this eloquent writer in the London Magazine for April, 1823, from the pen, I believe, of Mr. De Quincey. I should be glad to insert it all, but both the public and the author might complain of this. I venture to hope for the forgiveness of both, if not the thanks of the former, for the insertion of the beautiful translation of Jean Paul's character of Herder. It must, however, be understood that Jean Paul was universally regarded as a partial witness to Herder's merits.

"The passages in which John Paul speaks of Herder are many: two in particular I remember of great beauty, one in the *Flegel-jahre*, the other in his last works, *Der Comet* (1821;) but, not having those works at hand, I shall translate that which is cited by the editor of Mrs. Herder's Memoirs, omitting only such parts as would be unintelligible without explanations of disproportionate length.

"'Alike in all the changing periods of his own life, and by the most hostile parties, it was the fate of this great spirit to be misunderstood; and (to speak candidly) not altogether without his own fault. For he had this defect that he was no star—whether of the first, second, or any other magnitude—but a whole cluster and fasciculous of stars, out of which it is for every one to compose at pleasure a constellation shaped after his own preconception. Monodynamic men, men of a single talent, are rarely misapprehended; men of multitudinous powers almost always.—If he was no poet—as he would himself often protest, measuring

his own pretensions by the Homeric and Shakspearian* standard —he was, however, something still better, namely, a *Poem*, an Indico-Grecian Epopee, fashioned by some divinest and purest architect: how else, or by what analytic skill, should I express the nature of this harmonious soul—in which, as in a poem, all was reconciled and fused; in which the good, the beautiful, and the true, were blended and indivisible? Greece was to him the supreme object of devotion—the pole to which his final aspirations pointed; and, universally as he was disposed by his cosmopolitan taste to find and to honour merit, yet did he from his inmost soul yearn, in the very midst of the blooming lands through which he strayed, like any far-travelled Ulysses, for his restoration to a Grecian home; more especially in his latter years. Herder was designed as it were from some breathing Grecian model. Thence came his Grecian reverence for life in all its gradations: like a Brahmin, with a divine Spinozism of the heart, he loved the humblest reptile—the meanest insect—and every blossom of the woods. Thence came the epic style of all his works, which, like a philosophic epos, with the mighty hand and with the impartiality of a God, brought up before the eye† of centuries, and upon a stage of vastest proportions, all times, forms, nations, spirits. Thence also came his Grecian disgust towards all excess, disproportion, or disturbance of equilibrium, this way or that. Thence was it that like a Grecian poem he drew by anticipation round about every feeling and emotion a severe line of beauty, which not even the most impassioned was allowed to overstep.

"Few minds have been learned upon the same grand scale as Herder. The major part pursue only what is most rare and least familiar in science: he, on the contrary, could receive only the great and catholic streams of every science into the mighty depths of his own heaven-reflecting ocean, that impressed upon them all its own motion and fluctuation. Others are fastened upon by their own learning as by a withering and strangling ivy;

* For the sake of English readers I must mention (to those who know any thing of the German literature it is superfluous to mention) that Herder in common with every man of eminence in modern Germany, paid almost divine honours to Shakspeare: his wife tells us in her interesting Memoirs of him, that he could repeat Hamlet by by heart.

† "In the original '*vor das Säkularische ague;*' and in the true meaning of the word 'secular,' as it is exhibited by Milton in the fine expression—'A *secular* bird,' meaning the phœnix,—I might have translated it before the secular eye: but the vulgar theologic sense of word in English would have led to a misinterpretation of the meaning. No other equivalent term occurs to me, except *Aeonian;* and *that* is too uncommon to be generally intelligible.

but *his* hung about him as gracefully as the tendrils of a vine, and adorned him with fruit as with clusters of grapes.——How magnificently, how irreconcileably did he blaze into indignation against the creeping and crawling vermin of the times—against German coarseness of taste—against all sceptres in brutal paws —and against the snakes of the age! But would you hear the sweetest of voices, it was *his* voice in the utterance of love— whether for a little child, or for poetry, or for music, or in the tones of mercy and forbearance towards the weak. In general he has been little weighed or appraised, and in parts only—never as a whole. His due valuation he will first find in the diamond scales of posterity; into which scales will assuredly not be admitted the pebbles with which he was pelted by the coarse critics of his days, and the still coarser disciples of Kant. ——Two sayings of his survive, which may seem trifling to others; me they never fail to impress profoundly: one was, that on some occasion, whilst listening to choral music that streamed from a neighbouring church as from the bosom of some distant century, he wished, with a sorrowful allusion to the cold frosty spirit of these times, that he had been born in the middle ages. The other, and a far different, sentiment was—that he would gladly communicate with an apparition from the spiritual world, and that he neither felt nor forboded any thing of the usual awe connected with such a communication. O the pure soul that already held commerce with spirits! To such a soul this was possible, poetical as *that* soul was; and though it be true that just such souls it is that shudder with the deepest awe before the noiseless and inaudible mysteries that dwell and walk on the other side of death,—to his soul it was possible; for the soul of Herder was itself an apparition upon this earth, and never forgot its native world. At this moment I think I see him; and, potent as death is otherwise to glorify the images of men with saintly transfiguration—yet, methinks, that from the abyss of distance and of sumless elevation, he appears not more radiant or divine than he did here below; and I think of him, far aloft in the heavens and behind the stars, as in his *natural* place, and as of one but little altered from what he was, except by the blotting out of his earthly sorrows."

Note 36.

What I have said in the preceding note respecting Herder, applies still more to Wielend. The English reader can be at no loss for materials on which to judge of his character and works. Mr. Taylor has devoted half of his second volume to him; the *Oberon* has been elegantly translated, and several of his tales have also appeared in English. Of these, I remember to have seen only the *Agathon*, which gives but an inadequate idea of the original.

Falk speaks (page 32, vol. i.) with high admiration of Goethe's biographical sketches of Voss and Wieland, as affording proof of his singular power of entering into the whole character, views, and feelings of men totally unlike himself. The former is before the reader; the latter I have been almost deterred from inserting, by its length; the more so, as the kindness of a friend has furnished me with some original matter concerning Wieland, which is too interesting to be omitted. I have, however, at length resolved to give the greater part of this beautiful memoir as an act of justice, not only to Wieland but to Goethe, who has been accused of a tendency to depreciate his literary cotemporaries. The reader will be enabled to judge with what reason. I have abridged, wherever I thought I could without essential loss.

"Although it can never beseem an individual to oppose old and time-hallowed customs, and capriciously to alter what our forefathers have regarded with attachment and reverence, yet, were the enchanter's rod which the muse committed to the hand of our departed friend at my command, I would instantly transform this gloomy scene into one of cheerfulness; these sombre trappings should brighten under your eyes, and a festive, decorated hall, gay with brilliant tapestry and many-coloured garlands, should appear before you. Then might the creations of his blooming fancy attract your eyes and your imagination; Olympus, with his gods, brought before you by the Muses, adorned by the Graces, should serve as a living witness, that he who dwelt in such a world of beauty and gladness, and who departed from among us as cheerfully as he had lived, was to be regarded as one of the happiest of men, and by no means to be greeted with lamentations, but with expressions of joy and exultation.

"What, however, I cannot bring before your outward, let me call up to your inward, sense. Eighty years!—How much in a few syllables! Which of us can venture hastily to run through them, and to make present to himself the full significancy of

eighty years, well employed? Which of us can affirm, that he can instantly measure and appreciate the value of a life, in every respect *complete?* If we accompany our friend along the whole journey of his life—if we behold him in boyhood, youth, manhood, and old age, we find that it was his rare felicity to pluck the blossoms of every season; for even old age has its blossoms, and these it was granted him to enjoy to the utmost.

"I have not dared to resist the commands of our honoured masters, and the more willingly speak a few words in memory of him, since they can be but the heralds of what the world will say of him hereafter. In this view, and for his sake, I therefore venture to entreat an indulgent hearing; and if what I shall now deliver (inspired rather by a tried attachment of forty years' standing than by rhetorical skill,) though wanting in due coherency, and given but as it were in snatches, should appear neither worthy of him nor of this assembly, I must premise, that nothing is here to be looked for but a preliminary draft, a sketch, a mere table of contents, and, as it were, marginal notes of a future work. And thus let us proceed, at once, to our so dear, valued, nay, sacred subject." * * * * * *

Here follows a short biographical sketch.

"The effects of Wieland's writings on the public was uninterrupted and lasting. He educated his age, and gave a decided impulse to the taste and to the judgment of his cotemporaries, so that his merits are already recognised, appreciated, and described. And whence proceeded this great influence which he exercised over Germans? It was the consequence of the vigour and the frankness of his character. Man and author were, in him, completely blended; his poetry was life, and his life, poetry. Whether in verse or in prose, he never concealed what was his predominant feeling at the moment, nor what his general frame of mind. From the fertility of his mind, flowed the fertility of his pen. I use the word *pen* here, not as a rhetorical phrase—it has here a peculiar appropriateness; and if pious reverence ever hallowed the quill with which an author wrote his works, assuredly that which Wieland used was worthy of the distinction. For he wrote every thing with his own hand, and very beautifully—at once freely and carefully. He kept what he had written ever before his eyes; examined, altered, improved it; unweariedly cast and recast—nay, had the patience, repeatedly, to transcribe whole works of considerable extent. And this gave his productions the delicacy, the elegance, the clearness, the natural grace, which cannot be attained by mere drudgery, but by cheerful, genial attention to a work already completed.

"This elaboration of his works sprang from a joyful persuasion which, towards the close of his residence in Switzerland, took

possession of him; when the impatience *to produce* was somewhat appeased, and the wish to give the public something finished became more decided, distinct, and active.

"And as, in him, the man and the poet were one person, when we speak of the latter we describe the former. Excitability and mobility—the usual attendants of poetical and oratorical talent—prevailed in him to a high degree; but a moderation, rather acquired than natural, served as a counterpoise to them. Our friend was capable of the highest enthusiasm, and in youth gave himself completely up to it. He did this with the more ardour and persistency, because that beautiful time in which the youth feels within himself the value and the dignity of the highest and the best, be it attainable or unattainable, was prolonged for him through several years.

"Those glad, bright regions of the golden time, that paradise of innocence, he dwelt in longer than others. His natal roof, hallowed by the presence of his father, a learned pastor; the ancient cloister of Bergen, beneath its shade of antique limes, on the shores of the Elbe, where his pious teacher lived in patriarchal activity; the still monastic Tübingen; the simple dwellings of Switzerland, surrounded by gushing brooks, washed by clear lakes, hemmed in by rocks—in all he found his Delphi;—in all, the groves and thickets in which, even when arrived at manhood, he still revelled. Amid such scenes, he felt the mighty attraction of the monuments which the manly innocence of the Greeks has bequeathed to us. He lived in the lofty presence of Cyrus, Araspes, and Panthea. He felt the Platonic spirit move within him; he felt that he needed it, in order to represent to himself and to others these forms,—and the more, since his aim was not so much to call up poetic, shadowy pictures, as to obtain a moral influence on actual beings.

"But precisely because he had the good fortune to linger so long in these higher regions—because he was permitted so long to regard all that he thought, felt, imagined, dreamed, as the most absolute reality,—was the fruit which he was at last compelled to pluck from the tree of knowledge the more bitter to him.

"Who may escape the conflict with the outer world? Our friend, like the rest, was drawn into the strife; reluctantly he submitted to be contradicted by life and experience. And as, after long struggling, he could not succeed in combining these noble images with the ordinary world; these high intents with the necessities of the day, he determined to accept the actual as the necessary; and declared what had hitherto appeared to him Truth to be fantastic visions.

"But here, too, the peculiarity, the energy of his mind admirably displayed themselves. Spite of all his plenitude and enjoyment of

existence, his fine natural endowments, his honourable intellectual wishes and designs, he felt himself wounded by the world, and cheated of his greatest treasure. No where could he find again in experience what had formed the happiness of so many years of his life, nay, which was its very essence; but he did not waste himself in vain lamentations, such as we hear so many of in prose and in verse; he resolved on producing a counteraction. He declared war on all that cannot be shown to exist in reality; first on platonic love; then on all dogmatizing philosophy, especially the two extremes—the Stoic and the Pythagorean.

"He was the irreconcilable adversary of religious fanaticism, and of all that appears eccentric to a sound understanding.

"But now, the fear came upon him that he might be going too far—that he might himself be acting fantastically, and he immediately commenced a warfare with the Common-place. He declared himself against all that we are accustomed to understand by the word *Philisterey*,* against obstinate pedantry, provincialism (*kleinstädtisches Wesen*,) wearisome formalities, bigotted criticism, affected prudery, self-complacent folly, arrogant assumption of dignity, and against all those evil spirits whose name is Legion, distinguish them how we may.

"His treatment of all these topics was uniformly and thoroughly *genial*, without any show of design or self-consciousness. He found himself in the dilemma between the imaginable and the real, and being compelled to master or to mitigate both, he must hold fast to himself, and in order to be just he must become many-sided."

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Here Goethe proceeds to show the influence of Addison, Steele, and more particularly Shaftesbury, on the formation of Wieland's mind, "the result of which was (to employ a short but universally intelligible word) that Popular Philosophy by which a practical, exercised understanding was called to judge of the moral, as well as the æsthetical, value of things."

He then traces the influence of French literature on Wieland, after which he notices his translation of Shakspeare, a work which he says had been pronounced impossible. "Wieland translated freely, caught the sense of his author, left out what appeared to

* This word, I believe, owes its origin to the students of German universities, and was chiefly applied to the towns-people. A Philister is untranslatable, but may, I think, be paraphrased a man of common-places—a pompous dealer in identicalisms and *platitudes*, in a shop-keeping sort of morality and 'gentility,' and in all the common traditional saws and prejudices.—*Transl.*

him untranslatable, and thus gave his country a general notion of the noblest work of an earlier century.

"This translation, however great its influence on Germany, seems to have had little on Wieland himself. He was too entirely contrasted with his author, as appears from the passages he omitted, and still more from the notes, which betray French modes of thinking.

"But, on the other hand, the Greeks, in their severe, chaste, and polished genius, were his most precious models. Their taste became a law to him. Religions, manners, forms of government, all furnished him with occasion for the exercise of his many-sidedness; and even while he seems to doubt and to jest, he finds the desired opportunity for the repeated inculcation of his impartial, tolerant, humane doctrines."

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"It is true, an insight into the higher arts of design was requisite for these delineations; and as our friend never enjoyed the sight of the remains of the master-works of antiquity, he sought to raise himself to them by thought—to bring them before him in imagination. He succeeded to a degree that must excite our admiration; and would have succeeded perfectly, had not his usual laudable caution kept him from any thing daring; for art generally—antique art particularly—can neither be conceived nor understood without enthusiasm. He who will not begin with astonishment and admiration, can never find entrance to the sanctuary. But our friend was far too cautious for this; and how, indeed, could he, in this single case, make an exception to all his usual rules of life?"

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Goethe next speaks of Wieland's great success in illustrating the works of Horace and of Cicero, and of transporting himself and his readers into their society and times.

"Horace has many points of resemblance with Wieland. Himself a consummate artist, a courtier, and a man of the world, he was an acute and sound judge of life and of art. Cicero was a philosopher, an orator, a statesman, an active citizen. Both attained to high honours and dignities, from obscure beginnings."

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"There are two maxims of translation; the one requires that the author of a foreign nation be brought to us in such a manner that we may regard him as our own; the other, on the contrary, demands of us that we transport ourselves over to him, and adopt

his situation, his mode of speaking, his peculiarities.* The advantages of both are sufficiently known to all instructed persons, from masterly examples.

"Probably no one ever so intimately felt what an intricate business translation is as he. How deeply was he convinced that it is not the word, but the spirit, that quickens.

"Let us but observe how, in his introductions, he first labours to transport us back into the times, and to make us acquainted with the persons; how he then makes his author speak to us in a manner familiar to our sense and to our ear; and at last seeks to explain, and clear up by notes, many particulars which remain obscure, or which excite doubt or repugnance. We see clearly that by these three processes he has mastered his subject; and thus he takes the most conscientious pains to place us in the same situation, that we may share his insight, and thence, his enjoyment."

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Goethe then alludes to Wieland's political opinions and conduct, and proceeds to speak of the journal edited by him, the *Deutsche Mercur*, which he says, "through many years, may be taken as a clue to German literature." He concludes with a remark worth noting.

"More contributions than he expected, or even desired, flowed in upon the editor; his success raised up imitators; similar periodical works forced themselves on the public, first monthly, then weekly, then daily; till at length they produced that Babylonian confusion, of which we were, and are, witnesses; and the true source of which is, that every body wants to speak and nobody to hear.

"What sustained the value and the dignity of the *Deutsche Mercur*, for many years, was our friend's inborn liberality. Wieland was not formed to be the head of a party; he who acknowledges moderation as his leading maxim must not lend himself to any one-sidedness. Whatever excited his active mind, he sought to bring to its right level by the aid of good sense and taste; and thus he treated his *collaborateurs*, for whom he was carried away by no enthusiasm. He sometimes mortified, and even alienated, those whom he loved and valued, by disapproving comments."

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* In translating Goethe, I have always endeavoured to follow the latter 'maxim.' I have never succeeded to my wish, but I would at least disclaim all thought of making Goethe speak like an Englishman.—*Transl.*

"It has been acutely remarked by some foreigners, that German authors take less heed of the public than those of other nations; and that, therefore, it is easy to discern in their writings the man educating himself, the man who wants to owe something to himself; and consequently, to read his character. This was peculiarly true of Wieland; and it would be the more interesting to follow his writings and his life with this view, since suspicions have been cast on his character, drawn from these very writings. Many men still misunderstand him, because they imagine the Many-sided must be indifferent,—the Mobile must be infirm and inconsistent. They do not reflect that *character* regards the Practical alone. Only in what a man does, in what he continues to do, and persists in doing, can he show character; and, in this sense, never was there a firmer, more consistent man than Wieland. When he gave himself up to the variety of his sensations, to the mobility of his thoughts, and permitted no single impression to obtain dominion over him, he showed by that very process the firmness and certainty of his mind. He loved to play with his conceptions, but never—I take all his cotemporaries to witness—never with his opinions. And thus he won and retained numerous friends."

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Goethe thus mentions his retiring to Osmannstadt.

"But in the autumn of his days he was destined to experience the influence of the times, and, in an unlooked-for way, to enter upon a new life, a new youth. The blessing of benign peace had long rested upon Germany; external serenity and quiet were in beautiful harmony with internal humane, cosmopolitan feelings. The peaceful citizen appeared no longer to need his city's walls; he escaped from them, he longed for the country. The security of the land-owner gave confidence to all; the free life, in the midst of nature, attracted all; and as man, born for society, often cheats himself with the sweet dream, that he could live better, more conveniently, more joyfully in seclusion, so did Wieland, already in the possession of the highest literary leisure,* look around for more poetical retirement; and having bought an estate not far from Weimar, determined to pass the rest of his life there."

* * * * * * * * * * * *

"His rural happiness was interrupted by the death of his be-

* His pupil, the Grand Duke, continued his salary to him for life.—*Transl.*

loved friend,* and the excellent, careful partner of his life. He laid the dear remains in his own soil; and while he resolved to quit the scene of his past happiness, reserved to himself the space between these two beloved beings, as his own final resting-place. And thither did our honoured brethren accompany, nay, bear him, thus fulfilling his pleasant will, that posterity should honour his grave amid the cheerful aspect of living groves and thickets.

"Not without reason did he return to the town. His absence from his noble patroness, the Duchess Mother, had often embittered his retirement. He felt too much what it cost him to lose her society. * * * * * * *

"He returned, and was henceforth a member of her house and court.

"Wieland was truly formed for the higher circles; the highest would have been his proper element; for, as he never wished to lead, but willingly took part in every thing, and expressed himself with moderation on every subject, he could not fail to be an agreeable companion; and would have been still more so among a lighter nation, where all conversation were not engaged in too earnestly.

"For his poetical as well as his literary labours were directed to Life; and if he did not always seek a practical end, a practical aim was never far from his eye. Hence his thoughts were always clear, his expressions distinct, intelligible to all; and as, with all his extensive learning, he constantly adhered to the interest of the day, followed it out, and occupied his mind with it, his conversation was thoroughly various and enlivening; nor have I known any one who welcomed with more pleasure and cordiality, or answered with more animation, whatever was happily said by another.

"With such modes of thinking and social habits, with the honest intention of acting beneficially upon his age, we ought not to reproach him for receiving an aversion to the modern schools of philosophy. So long as Kant gave out only the prelude to his great views, and, in agreeable forms, seemed to express himself problematically on the most momentous subjects, he stood at no great distance from our friend; but when the enormous philosophical structure was erected, all those who had gone on freely—poetizing or philosophizing—must needs see in it a frowning keep or fortress, by which their pleasant excursions over the field of experience would be controlled and abridged.

"But not only the philosopher, the poet also, had much to dread

* Sophie Brentano, daughter of his first love, Sophie von Guttermann, afterwards Frau von la Roche, so often mentioned in Goethe's Autobiography.—*Transl.*

from this new turn given to the minds of men, as soon as any considerable mass were affected by it. For although, at first, it appeared as if its views were exclusively confined to science, then to morals, or subjects most immediately dependant on them; it was easy to see that, after endeavouring to lay the foundations of these weighty questions of higher science and of morals more deeply and firmly than had ever yet been done,—after acquiring a more rigorous and consistent judgment, unfolded out of the very depths of human nature,—the adherents of this system would soon apply the same principles to matters of taste; and consequently would endeavour entirely to set aside all individual propensities, accidents of education, and national peculiarities, and to establish a universal law as the *norma* or standard of criticism.

"And accordingly this took place; and a new epoch arose in poetry, which was in necessary opposition to our friend, and he to it. From this time he had to endure many an unfair judgment. This, however, affected him little; and I mention the circumstance, only because the conflict that then arose in German literature is still by no means decided; and because a person who really wishes to do justice to Wieland's merits and to defend his memory, must be well informed as to the posture of things,—the rise as well as the consequences of opinions, the character and talents of the persons concerned; must know the powers and the merits of both sides; and, in order to act impartially, must, so to speak, belong to both parties.

"But leaving these greater or lesser feuds, I must mention one important event in Wieland's life. Our peaceful retreat, sheltered by hills and mountains, amid sweetly-watered vallies, had long been threatened, though not actually scared, by war. When, at length, the eventful day arose which plunged us into amazement and terror,—when the fate of the world was decided in our familiar walks,—even in these fearful moments, which our friend met with perfect composure, his good-fortune did not forsake him. He was preserved, first by the precautions of a young and intrepid friend, and then by the attentions of the French commanders.* He had soon to bear, in common with us all, the afflicting loss of Amalie. Court and city vied with each other in their endeavours to console him. Soon afterwards he received, from two emperors, distinctions which he had never sought nor looked for.

"But, whether in sorrow or in joy, he was always like himself; and herein he enjoyed the privilege of delicately constituted na-

* The account of Wieland's interview with Napoleon was, I think, published in the journals of the time, in this country.—*Transl.*

tures, whose tempered susceptibility can meet good or evil fortune with moderation.

"Most admirable did he appear, corporeally and mentally, after the grievous accident which befell him at so advanced an age, by the overturn of a carriage. The painful consequences of his fall, the tedium of his recovery, he bore with the most perfect equanimity; and consoled himself and his friends, saying that he had never met with such a disaster before, and that it might well seem fair in the sight of heaven that he should thus bear his portion of the evils of humanity. His constitution recovered with the elasticity of youth, and afforded a beautiful proof how delicacy and purity of mind contribute to physical force.

"As his philosophy stood this test, his accident occasioned no change in his way of thinking or of living. After his recovery, social as before, he took part in the common topics of court and city, and, with solicitous interest, in the labours of his associates. How much soever his eye seemed directed to the understanding and utilizing of the Earthly, it was impossible for him, with his high gifts, to withdraw himself from the Super-mundane, the Super-sensual. And here, too, that conflict which we have thought it our duty to allude to above, came remarkably to view; for while he appeared to decline all that lies beyond the boundary of universal consciousness, beyond the sphere of what can be affected by experience, he could never refrain from seeking to look, if not to step, beyond the line he had so sharply defined, and to construct and figure, after his manner, that extra-mundane world of which all the natural powers of our minds give us no knowledge or tidings.

"Familiar from his youth with the mysteries of antiquity, his cloudless, cheerful temper led him to shun all that was gloomy. But he did not deny, that rude and sensual man was first led to higher conceptions by these strange outward images; was awakened by presignificant symbols to mighty and soul-illuminating ideas—to the faith in one All-ruling God—to a perception of the value of virtue—till the hope in the continuance of existence was purged from the terrors of gloomy superstition, and from the vitiated demands of sensuality."

* * * * * * * *

"Though called upon by our honoured masters to speak some few words of the departed, I should gladly have declined it, from the conviction that not a transient hour, nor a few light, unconnected leaves, but whole years, and many well-considered and connected volumes are necessary, to do justice to his memory. I undertook this duty only in the thought that what I have laid be-

fore you might serve as an introduction to what may be better done hereafter by others."

The few sentences that follow occur in the *Dichtung und Wahrheit.*

"Without all question, Wieland had the finest natural endowments. He had early formed himself in that ideal region in which youth loves to linger; but as this had been defaced and wounded by what is called experience, by intercourse with the world and women, he threw himself entirely on the side of the Real, and pleased himself and others in the conflict of the two worlds, in which, between jest and earnest, his talent displayed itself most beautifully in that light warfare. How many of his most brilliant productions appeared during my academical years! *Musarion* had the strongest effect upon me. I can still remember the very spot where I saw the first sheets of it, which Oeser showed me. Here it was that I felt as if I saw the Antique resuscitated, and living before me. All that is plastic in Wieland's genius, here displayed itself in its highest perfection. One easily pardoned, in these works, a sort of gay hostility to *exaltè* modes of thinking, which, by a very easy misapplication to actual life, often degenerate into mere fantastic dreams. One forgave the author for pursuing what is commonly esteemed true and venerable with ridicule, the more readily, because he proves by it how much trouble it gave him."

RECOLLECTIONS OF WIELAND.

[Communicated by a friend.]

"There are few efforts at recollection of which the results are more mortifying than when we try to recall what we have recently heard from so brilliant a converser as Madame de Staël, or so magnificent a monoloquist as Coleridge; but it is even worse, if we are desirous of bringing back the impressions of our youth, when we had heard and seen any one of the great men with whose name the world is filled. I take credit to myself for

great good nature in consenting to expose the poverty of my own reminiscences of Wieland.

"It was in November, 1801, that I accompanied the poet Seume and the painter Schnor on a pedestrian excursion in Saxony, in the course of which we made calls upon the great men of Weimar, the spurious as well as the genuine; upon Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Wieland, and—Kotzebue; but I will speak only of Wieland.—We found him living in his Dutch-like country residence at Osmannstadt, near Weimar; the retirement in which he had spent a long life of literary labour. His appearance by no means excited the awe which Goethe eminently, and Herder also, and even Schiller, in lower degrees, spread around them. He was then approaching his seventieth year, and was no longer surrounded by that halo of reputation which distinguished him in his youth and middle age. His personal appearance was nothing less than commanding; for his cast of countenance was precisely that (excepting a small and handsome ear) which the Greeks idealized into the youthful fawn and aged satyr. He had a large mouth, a broad flattened nose, little gray eyes, and a yellowish complexion. The only agreeable feature of his face was a very spacious forehead, marked by long horizontal lines, which being straight could hardly be called wrinkles. His head was covered with a black velvet skull-cap which he never laid aside, even at the Duke's table, and which, connected in my imagination with the pictures of the old puritan divines of the seventeenth century, threw something of a sacred air over an otherwise very sensual countenance. As soon as he began to talk, however, his placid and passionless hilarity, and very clear-headed and acute understanding, greatly improved his appearance, so that I left him, after an hour's chat, with a feeling of kindness I did not dare to entertain towards any other of the literary magnates of Weimar.

"He had lost his wife but a few weeks before, and in answer to the condolence of my companions spoke of her with great cheerfulness,—'She was my guardian angel for five and thirty years, and at my age my feeling towards her will never weaken. What I have once tenderly loved never dies for me. I help myself with illusions. She is dead only to my outward sense, and that is certainly painful.' We inquired about his family. It had been numerous. He said, with a *naivetè* of expression common to the German and French, but which we cannot literally render in English, '*Aucun auteur n'a fait tant d'enfans et de livres que moi.*' The children of his body amounted to fourteen; the volumes of his collected works, including the appendix, amount to between fifty and sixty; besides an immense labour as editor, and infinite translations Shakspeare, Lucian, Aristophanes, Horace, Cicero, &c. We conversed on the most interesting topics of the

day, or rather of the age; on Buonaparte, the French revolution, &c. The anti-enthusiastic turn of his mind led to opinions which it gave me as little pleasure in hearing him repeat in conversation as in reading them in his Agathon, Agathodæmon, Aristippus, &c. You are acquainted with the mild epicureanism of Wieland's philosophy, which he asserted on all occasions. In the course of a short conversation he found an occasion of expressing his approbation of Buonaparte's assumption of power as the only state of things for which France was fit. And it startled me not a little when he said that Buonaparte had done wisely in re-establishing the catholic church as an organ of the state. 'We protestants,' he said, 'are habitually unjust to the catholics, and false in our representations of their system. Theirs is, after all, the real Christianity, and in my mind preferable to the motley thing we have called the reformation.' Of the reformation he also spoke farther, and very much as Mr. W. Taylor has done in his Survey of German poetry. He said that it had retarded the progress of philosophy for centuries;—that Erasmus, Melancthon, and a few others, were on the right road, but that Luther had spoiled all by making the people a party to what should have been left to the thinkers. Hence a series of horrid wars throughout Europe, and the generation of malignant passions in individuals. But for this, liberty and science,' and philanthropy would have made rapid progress. There were great men in Italy especially, who were crushed entirely. I recollect being mortified at my inability to do more than express my strong dissent from this view of the subject.

"It was not till the year 1804 that I saw Wieland again, when he had become the table-companion of the Duchess Dowager of Weimar, with whom I frequently saw him. Nothing could be more delightful than the dinners the Duchess used to give. She and Wieland were like the grandfather and grandmother of a family party, to whom in reverence every one of the company addressed their discourse, and who left their younger companions to defray the cost of the conversation. Wieland never hesitated giving his opinion upon whatever topic was brought forward. He had been in the habit of doing so for a quarter of a century, every month, in his German Museum; so that, had he had a Boswell at his elbow, his biographer would have found his book anticipated. He talked readily about himself, and had not that fastidious fear of being thought egotistic which is a bitter foe to, and destructive of, the best of conversation. One day I said that the first great book I read was Pilgrim's Progress. This set him in motion, and he talked delightfully about his own youth:—'Oh I am pleased to hear that—for it was precisely so with me, I learned my spelling in a German Bunyan; your English authors, have

always had a great effect on me. There's another of your dissenting writers—Mrs. Rowe. My very first book was an imitation of her Letters from the dead to the living. To be sure I went to the Latin for poetry. When I was eighteen I wrote a didactic poem. I was in love then with Fraulein Guttermann. It was an imitation too; and I said to myself, Poor Lucretius; it will be all over with you now!—no body will read you any longer.' In this there was probably a playful exaggeration of his own vanity; which, however, did not leave him, and always assumed an amiable form.

"In after life English literature still retained its influence over him, he said, but in an opposite direction. Gay and Prior became his favourites, and Prior suggested to him his *Comische Erzählungen*. How widely Wieland had departed from his former tastes may be inferred from this, that on my inquiring what French novels he recommended he said, 'Of Count Hamilton *opera omnia*.' He even spoke favourably of the forgotten novels of Prevost, and of those of Crebillon which ought to be forgotten.

"On a *tête á tête* drive with him from Weimar to the Duchess's country-house at Tiefurt, he spoke freely of his own writings. He said that he had gone over his *Musarion* with Goethe, line by line, and did not think there was a passage that could be altered for the better. I had remarked to him that I thought his prose peculiarly hard to translate from its diffusiveness. 'That is' he replied, 'the characteristic of my writings. The Greeks called it Στωμυλια, but I do not think there is any absolute *Geschwätz* (mere prattle) in my writings.' He was fully sensible that his taste was French. He called the French the Greeks of modern times, incapable of republican virtue; and from whose revolution therefore the world had no benefit to expect but a more liberal encouragement of the arts and sciences.

"On one occasion (1804–5) I had obtained a sight of the just-published correspondence of Gleim, Heinse, &c.; and finding he had not yet seen it, I remarked, 'You do not then know what—— writes of you.' [I regret that the writer's name has escaped me; I should have thought it Gleim himself; but I do not know that he ever visited Switzerland, nor would Wieland perhaps have applied to him the remark that followed.] 'No! but I should be glad to know:'—'He writes—There is here at Bodmer's a remarkably clever young man—[Wieland was in fact twenty or twenty-one during his visit to Bodmer] he is a great talker and a great writer; only it is a pity (*schade!*) that one can foresee he will soon be exhausted (*erschöpft.*') '*Ich erschöpft!*' exclaimed the old man, lifting up both his hands—'I am now in my seventy-third year, and, with God's help, I mean now to write more than he

ever did in all his life; and it shall last longer too.'——This unconcealed opinion of himself not being accompanied by any harshness or intolerance towards others (for he was an indulgent critic,) gave no offence. I recollect hearing him express but one strikingly unfavourable judgment of any one of his contemporaries, and that was remarkable both from the time when it was uttered and because it was at variance with the opinion of his countrymen. On the 9th of May, 1805, Schiller died; he was buried on the night of the 11th, and on the 13th I dined with the Duchess Amelia. The late Mr. Hare Naylor was of the party, and Wieland, of course. The great man so recently departed was a principal subject of our conversation, and Wieland, who spoke of him personally with his characteristic kindness and good feeling, with respect to his poetic talents, said 'Schiller was a great philosophical and lyric poet, but ought not to have devoted himself to the drama; his mind was not dramatic.'

"It was a few months after this that I saw him for the last time. I called to take leave, and finding him writing, I apologized. 'I am merely copying,' he said. 'I am going over again my Aristophanes' (which he was publishing in successive numbers of the *Attisches Musæum*) 'And you have no amanuensis, Herr Hofrath?—'No; nor ever had. I believe one-sixth of my time has been spent in copying, and I am convinced it has been useful to me. One whose business is composition, and that too of works of invention and imagination, is benefited by the *sedative* effect of a semi-mechanical occupation.'

"He took leave of me with a warm expression of good-will, and with a cast of melancholy with which a very aged person must be affected on taking leave of a foreign traveller. He survived till 1813, when he died in his eighty-first year."

H. C. R.

Note 37.

"However Wieland's attempt at rendering Shakspeare may have been surpassed by Schlegel's classical translation, Wieland will ever retain the merit of having been the first to give the German public any adequate idea of Shakspeare. Schlegel himself was so fully sensible of Wieland's merits, that in his translation of the Midsummer Night's Dream, he has given the whole farce of Pyramus and Thisbe word for word, in the extremely

burlesque rhyme of his predecessor. This was done with Wieland's permission—and thankfully acknowledged in the preface, —at a time too (1800) when Wieland's Shakspeare was generally regarded as antiquated, and was half forgotten.

"Goethe's enthusiastic admiration, however, was half gratitude. The work had for him a *pretium affectionis*. He had read Shakspeare in his youth, for the first time, in that form."—(*Ad. H.*)

Note 38.

"This expression does honour to both poets, and especially to Goethe. The motives which prompted it can be little known in England. The new school (that of Tieck, the Schlegels, *&c.*) had entrenched themselves behind the universal reputation of Goethe, chiefly for the purpose of pulling down Wieland; and we are compelled reluctantly to confess that the German public suffered itself to be carried away by the stream and, were guilty of the greatest ingratitude to Wieland. He had presided over German literature for more than half a century, and had advanced the taste of the nation; nay more, had popularized philosophy, to a degree which it is impossible to calculate. But the new school utterly disregarded this; they held him up to reprobation as a corruptor of the people, an imitator of the French, and called him the German Voltaire,—a title the infamy of which those alone can estimate who know the strong disgust with which the tone of that extraordinary man, on subjects of religion and morals, is regarded by the German nation, so preposterously represented by some half-informed English writers, as generally inclined to scepticism.

"The reproach thus conveyed had an appearance of truth. The object of all his writings was, like that of Voltaire, to combat prejudices; and his philosophy has unquestionably a sceptical, and, in part, an Epicurean cast.

"In character, however, he was entirely unlike Voltaire. His *life* was pure and simple, as that of a child. But the school whose grand object it was to introduce religious mysticism and the romance of the middle ages, never could forgive Wieland what he had done to enlighten the nation. They accused him of infidelity, because in his *Agathodæmon*, for instance, he endea-

voured to represent Christianity in the moral grandeur it possesses, even to those who do not believe in the miracles related in the New Testament.

"Two merits, however, the new school acknowledged in Wieland; the first having awakened the taste for the Romantic by his *Oberon*;—this indeed it was impossible to deny; secondly, they allowed that if Wieland had continued to write with the same simplicity he showed in his *Pervonte* (so much eulogized by Goethe,) his talent for romantic and chivalrous poetry would unquestionably have raised him to a very high rank.

"Goethe's judgment is as candid as it is accurate and clear-sighted, when he says that a future generation, free from all these feelings of party and of prejudice, will know how to estimate Wieland."

(*Ad. H.*)

Having put together these materials concerning Herder and Wieland, I cannot better conclude my humble labour as a compiler of illustrative notes, than with this striking passage from Jean Paul. I have said nothing of Schiller because Mr. Carlyle's beautiful life of him (which was translated into German at Goethe's desire) leaves nothing to be said or wished.

"Herder, Wieland, and Goethe were allied in the lofty faculty of looking with equal eye at the whole world. In all nations and ages, in all the great mutations of human things, they saw and acknowledged the rights, the advantages,—the lights and the shadows, with an impartial all-sidedness. This cosmopolitanism of glance they had in common:—with this difference—Wieland excelled in seizing the character of historical persons (as for instance the Emperor Augustus,) Herder the character of masses, as nations and ages; Goethe, both. Schiller had it neither for different nations, nor, still less, for the Muses of different nations."

(*Kleine Bücherschau.*)

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